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# ROMANCE

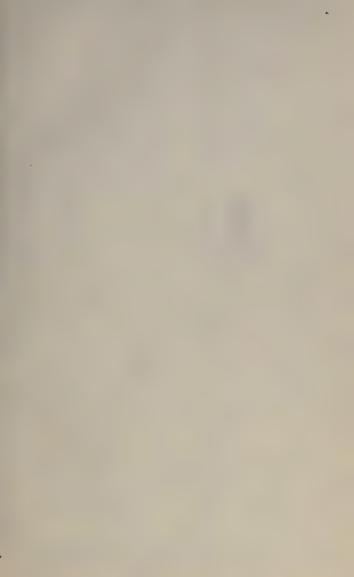
TWO ROMANCES OF THE DEATH OF ARTHUR · WITH AN INTRO-DUCTION BY LUCY ALLEN PATON THE PUBLISHERS OF EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY WILL BE PLEASED TO SEND FREELY TO ALL APPLICANTS A LIST OF THE PUBLISHED AND PROJECTED VOLUMES TO BE COMPRISED UNDER THE FOLLOWING THIRTEEN HEADINGS:

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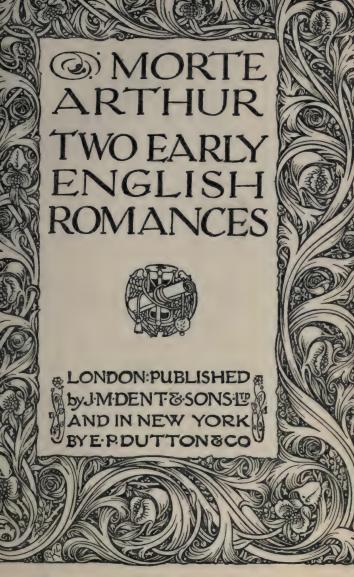


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## INTRODUCTION

"In sleep I seem'd To sail with Arthur under looming shores, Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams Begin to feel the truth and stir of day. To me, methought, who waited with a crowd, There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore King Arthur, like a modern gentleman Of stateliest port; and all the people cried. 'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.' Then those that stood upon the hills behind Repeated-' Come again, and thrice as fair:' And, further inland, voices echoed-' Come With all good things, and war shall be no more,"

TENNYSON, Morte D'Arthur.

THE two early English metrical romances contained in this volume—the first, Morte Arthure, in a translation into modern English; the second, Le Morte Arthur, in its original text-although they bear the same title, differ widely in their contents and in their presentation of such incidents as are common to both. The former deals chiefly with the expedition of the Britons against Rome, the treason of Modred and the death of Arthur; the latter recounts the story of the Maid of Ascolot, the course of Lancelot's love for Guinevere and, in its concluding portions, the history of Modred's treason and Arthur's final battle. Together the two romances form typical examples of the many tales that have come down to us depicting "a time that hover'd between war and wantonness." Each has a peculiar interest as an admirable member of the body of English verse romance, and also from the place that it occupies in Arthurian literature, for each stands in a close relation to the Arthurian source most familiar to English readers, the great Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory.

. The metrical romance, like most other forms of mediæval literary composition, had its origin and most brilliant development in France. During the second half of the twelfth century, Crestien de Trois, a gifted poet at the

court of the Countess Marie de Champagne, produced the first French poetical romances. He is easily the most distinguished of a long line of French versifiers, who embodied in episodic romances material derived from many sources, but consisting principally of chivalric adventures, related in terms that reflect the life of the courts which they were destined to please. To the taste of Crestien's readers the tales afforded by the so-called "matter of Britain," already current in France, were peculiarly adapted, and lent themselves readily to him and his successors as a means for depicting the chivalric life and ideals with which they were surrounded. Crestien's work deservedly met with great success, and gave a powerful impetus to the production of lengthy chivalric poems dealing with Arthur and his knights. But in spite of the immense popularity that Arthurian verse romance attained at this period in France, it did not flourish on the neighbouring soil of England until the fourteenth century, when it had already begun to fade in its native land. It is true that the foundation for the literary development of romantic material in England had been laid in Anglo-Norman days. From the time of the Conquest, minstrels from across the Channel, ever welcome in hall and bower, had played a large part in transporting to England the tales that had been versified in France. They found their audiences in courtly circles, where the recognised language was French, where composition in the vernacular, if it had been thought of at all, would have appeared useless and undignified, and where even the tales of Anglo-Saxon heroes were dressed in the language and verse of the conquerors. By the middle of the thirteenth century, however, the English people were feeling the spirit of nationalism stir within them; the language which had existed, not as a unit, but in numerous dialects, began to be welded into a literary form, translations from the French poetical material into the vernacular were undertaken, and by the beginning of the fourteenth century, under the reign of Edward I., metrical romances in the English tongue occupied a recognised and important place in literature. The English poet, in selecting his subject-matter, was heedless of literary merit. He seized upon whatever would

prove interesting to his hearers, and pressed epic as well as romantic material into his service, treating both alike with a calm disregard of the widely differing metrical form in which French taste had embodied each. But although the early English romances represent a large variety of subjects, it is evident that the Arthurian legend was a favourite theme. The extant poems embodying it are numerous, and are often extremely valuable as representatives of lost French originals. They have also a wider interest, that appeals to the layman as well as to the scholar, in that they are excellent exponents of the spirit of England at the period when they flourished. Seldom, if ever, rising to the delicacy of form or the inventive charm of French romance, they give rich promise of many characteristics of the more distinguished periods of English literature-vigour of style, freedom and strength of vocabulary, delight in the simpler beauties of nature, and familiarity with a life passed amid her pleasures.

It was under the reign of Edward III., whose victories had developed the self-consciousness of his people, that the English language became the accepted vehicle for literary expression, and that English poetry assumed a more definitely national form. The attitude of the English at that time toward their legendary history, as Ten Brink has said, was "that of a people who throughout a long period of foreign dominion had been separated from their past." To this past, then, their thoughts turned, and its traditions acquired a peculiar value. As an altogether natural consequence of this tendency, the older alliterative form of verse, which had an archaistic flavour, was revived and became popular. More and more the verse romances were diffused among the people, and continually lost their place as the exclusive possession of polite circles. In the early days of this period it is probable that the alliterative

poem, Morte Arthure, was composed.

### II

Who the author of the *Morte Arthure* was and just where he lived and wrote, are subjects of controversy. The dialect of the poem indicates that it was composed in the north-

west of England, a region where alliterative verse and also the Arthurian legend were popular. Traces of Scottish forms in its lines, however, have led some scholars to believe that its origin is to be sought in Scotland, and it has frequently been attributed to the pen of the Scotch poet Huchown, known as Huchown of the Awla Ryale (de aula regia), who lived during the middle of the fourteenth century. This attribution to Huchown is based upon a statement made by the fifteenth-century Scottish chronicler, Wyntoun, who, in his Cronykil of Scotland, speaks of Huchown in flattering terms, and mentions among his works "the gret Geste of Arthure," of which he rehearses the contents. The agreements between the material of his account and the Morte Arthure, and between the style of the Morie Arihure and that of the Pystyl of Swete Susanne, a poem of which Huchown's authorship is undisputed, have given rise to the theory that the Morte Arthure is none other than the "gret Geste of Arthure." This theory, however, appears untenable in the light of Wyntoun's further statement that he had found in Huchown's work "na writ" about Arthur's death, of which the Morte Arthure contains a detailed account. Huchown's authorship is therefore far from indisputably proved, and the poem is still most frequently classed among the great mass of anonymous mediæval productions. Its probable date of composition is assigned to about the middle of the fourteenth century (1340-1360). It exhibits the disposition manifested in many English works of the time to treat romance as fact, and it tends toward chronicle history rather than romantic narrative. The author, according to his own statement, relates his story "as salle in romance be redde." "as romawns us tellis," and "as cronycles tellys." He evidently relied principally upon the "cronycles," and used as his basis the *Historia Regum Britanniæ* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, which he supplemented with the Brut of Layamon; but it is plain that he also had before him French romances, Arthurian and non-Arthurian.

In his introductory verses the poet says that he proposes to tell a tale of the men of the Round Table, how they slew Lucius, lord of Rome, and conquered his kingdom by force of arms. The poem falls into three parts, the first of which,

extending to the time when Arthur had "richly rebuked the Romans for ever," and the second, which ends after the Pope's offer to crown Arthur king of Rome.2 correspond to these two divisions of his subject; the third and last part, which has to do with Modred's treachery and Arthur's death, the poet says nothing about in his introduction, possibly because it sheds less lustre upon Arthur's fame than the story of his Roman campaign. The first and third parts are based upon the chronicles: the second, which is principally taken up with Arthur's expedition against the Duke of Lorraine and an adventure of Gawain, appears to have for its source a non-Arthurian episodic romance, supplemented by the author's own narrative. It is also evident that his presentation of Lancelot, Iwain, Gawain, and Modred belongs to a more advanced stage of Arthurian story than is found in the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Layamon, and implies an acquaintance with later Arthurian material than that recounted by them.

The author was a person of true originality, of which he continually gives evidence, and especially in certain interpolations that are plainly his own. The most important of these are the accounts of Arthur's reception of the Roman ambassadors,3 the reluctance of Modred to accept the care 3 of the kingdom in Arthur's absence, and Guinevere's grief at parting from Arthur,4 both of which enhance the tragedy of their subsequent faithlessness, the wonderful hues of the dragon in Arthur's dream,5 the contest with the giant Golapas,6 and the nine kings of the wheel of Fortune.7 Perhaps his most remarkable display of ingenuity is seen in Arthur's combat with the giant of St. Michael's Mount, where he uses as his main source Geoffrey's account of the same adventure, but also weaves into his narrative details drawn from an episode of which Kay and Bedewere were doubtless the original heroes, as well as from the story of Arthur's contest with the giant Ritho, which receives merely a brief mention in Geoffrey's version.8 Our poet was also gifted

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> V. 2371; below, p. 51. <sup>2</sup> V. 3206; below, p. 69. <sup>3</sup> VV. 116-242; below, pp. 3-6. <sup>4</sup> VV. 648-720; below, pp. 14-16. <sup>5</sup> VV. 764-770; below, pp. 17. <sup>6</sup> VV. 2111-2134; below, p. 46. <sup>7</sup> VV. 3269-3362; below, pp. 71-73. <sup>8</sup> The foregoing conclusions in regard to the sources of the poem are those reached by Branscheid in his careful study mentioned below in the bibliography.

with a rich imagination, which is seen in many of the details with which he expands his source, as, for example, in his minute descriptions of the robe of Arthur and of the pilgrim's weeds of Cradok, of the Roman camp, and in general of the armour of warriors and of the fabrics worn by fair ladies. In the latter part of the poem he treats his sources freely and interpolates largely. The long account of the king's dream of Fortune and her wheel, for instance, is entirely an addition to the chronicle sources, but it is not to be regarded necessarily as a production of the author's own brain; dreams and the wheel of Fortune are commonplace in mediæval literature, and any writer had at his disposal an abundance of sources for such an episode as this.

The poet's rôle is, however, as I have said, that of a chronicler and not of a dealer in fiction. His treatment of the story of Arthur's death is very characteristic. The belief, existing as early as the twelfth century, that Arthur had not died on his final battlefield, and that he would surely return to earth, had assumed in the course of time several forms in popular tradition.1 The early and mythical version of the story represented the wounded king as transported for healing from his final battlefield to Avalon, the fairyland of romance, whence he would return to earth when he was whole once more. This tradition the author of the Morte Arthure had found rationalised in Geoffrey's pages, and told in one mythical form in Layamon's Brut. But the version that he adopted is a purely historical narrative, representing the king as slain in battle and buried at Glastonbury, a place which owing to a curious confusion in legend and etymology had been earlier identified with Avalon. This is typical of his aim, which was to tell his story from the historical point of view,—"to telle a tale, that trewe is and nobylle," and in doing this he discarded many fantastic elements. His manner throughout is that of the earnest chronicler, unspoiled by the con-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the early and persistent belief in Arthur's return to earth, and for the forms which this belief assumed, see my Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance, Boston, 1902; Mort Artu, ed. J. D. Bruce, Halle, 1900, notes to p. 250, ll. 3 fl.; p. 251, ll. 1 fl.; also, in a mere résumé, Arthurian Chronicles (Everyman's Library), Introduction, Excursus III.

ventions of courtly romance. He writes essentially in the spirit of a man to whom the world about him is interesting and very real. His appreciation of nature is fresh and genuine: he lingers pleasantly over his descriptions of woods and fields—the swift river where "the trees overreach with royal boughs," where the banks flourish with "flowers full many," and all the fowls "flit about that fly with wings," where the sound of the water and singing of the birds "might salve him of sore that sound was never." Gawain, he tells us, waits with his men in the misty morning in a meadow of new-mown hay, "full of sweet flowers. . . . till the graving of the day, when birds begin to sing, until the rising of the sun that is sent of Christ." His humour is equally unaffected. Arthur cleaves the giant Golapas asunder at the knees, "' Come down,' quoth the king, 'to talk to thy comrades; thou art too high by half. I promise thee, in sooth. Thou shalt be handsomer in height, with the help of my Lord.'" His pathos is even more simple, as, for instance, in Modred's lament over the body of Gawain, his "matchless" comrade, whom his treason has destroyed. "That traitor quickly let hot tears fall, quickly turns him away and talks no more, goes weeping away, and curses the hours that ever his fate was wrought to work such woe;" and again in Arthur's sorrow, when he finds "Gawayne the gude in his gaye armes" lying dead:—"'The king of all knights that under Christ lived, Thou wast worthy to be king, though I the crown bare.'"

It is a tribute to Malory's discrimination that he used a work of such high merit as this poem as the source for the fifth book of his *Morte Darthur*. The theory that he did so is based upon the resemblances in phraseology and in order of incident, both of which are so close that Malory is regarded as having simply made a prose redaction of the poem, with, however, many omissions and some misunderstandings. The latter part of the *Morte Arthure* <sup>1</sup> he did not employ, for he embodies in his twenty-first book material dealing with the same theme, but derived from another source.

<sup>1</sup> Vv. 3217 to end; below, pp. 69 ff.

### III

The stanzaic poem, Le Morte Arthur, has received far less attention from critics than the earlier Morte Arthure. It possesses in fact less literary distinction, but has high merit of its own, and from its material is more attractive to the general reader. It has, moreover, a special interest, both because it is our first version in English of the story of the Maid of Ascolot, made familiar to us all in Tennyson's Elaine, and also because it is the first English source to preserve the mythical and romantic account of Arthur's death in a form more sophisticated than that given by Layamon, and destined to receive an established place in modern English poetry in Tennyson's Morte D'Arthur.

Our poem is contained in a unique manuscript in the British Museum, written in two hands, the first of which ends with verse 1001. Its dialect is Midland, and although scholars are divided in opinion as to whether it is East or North-west Midland, the evidence points somewhat more conclusively to the latter. The dialect of the scribes was evidently also Midland, although the second uses southern forms not found in the work of the first. Linguistic evidence points to the latter part of the fourteenth century as the probable date of composition. Here again we are dealing with the work of an unknown author. It has been suggested that it was written by the poet who composed the Lyfe of Ipomydon, which is contained in the same manuscript, but the differences in style between the two works form strong arguments against the identity of their authors. The form and style of the poem indicate that the writer belonged to the minstrel class. It is written in stanzas of eight lines of four accents each. In general the lines rhyme alternately, but irregularities sometimes occur. A few stanzas contain only seven verses, owing perhaps to an omission on the part of the scribe in copying, or on the part of the poet, who either may not have noticed or may not have thought it worth while to supply the defect in a work which he was undoubtedly composing primarily for purposes of narration. The poem has been compared to a ballad, and although the impersonal tone, which is one of

the chief characteristics of ballad poetry, is interrupted by occasional references to a source (as, in the romans as we rede, v. 2363; so says the boke, v. 2493), in the directness and flow of the narrative and in the verse structure, the production is more nearly allied to the ballad than to the metrical romance.

The question of the sources of the poem, and its relation to Malory's Morte Darthur, Books XVIII., XX., and XXI., has been the subject of a spirited controversy between Dr. H. O. Sommer and Professor J. D. Bruce. The limits of this introduction do not permit a discussion, nor even an adequate summary of the views advanced by either scholar. The reader who would acquaint himself fully with the question is referred to the articles on the subject mentioned in the bibliography given below. Suffice it to say briefly here that the similarities coupled with the differences in contents and phraseology between the French prose romance of Lancelot, Malory, and Le Morte Arthur point to the conclusion that the two latter works are to be traced to a common French original now lost, which for the Eighteenth Book of Malory and verses 1-1672 of Le Morte Arthur was a redaction of the French prose Lancelot, and for the remainder of the poem and the Twentieth and Twenty-first Books of Malory was another redaction of the Lancelot, which differed slightly from that used as the source for the earlier part of the poem.

In considering the merits and defects of our author, we shall do well to acknowledge and dismiss his special weakness before turning to his virtues. He is far from exact or accomplished in the use of rhyme; in fact his supply of rhyme-words is extraordinarily limited even for his day and generation, and he draws upon it with painfully infrequent variation. He also has a pronounced liking for certain poetic formulas, such as, "is not to hyde," "breme as boar," "tille on a tyme that it by-felle," "hend and fre," "withouten lese," to which he turns in many a time of need. But in spite of this rather excessive subservience to convention, and although he lacks the vigour of imagination, the intensity of feeling and the originality in description that the poet of the Morte Arthure possessed, he manifests real power as an easy and agreeable story-teller,

who by the quiet, even beauty of his poem, which comes like the gentle peal of a bell after the rush and force of the vigorous lines of the Morte Arthure, cannot fail to please. The charm of his simple narration of a story singularly appealing to the human nature of all periods, is altogether unlike the courtly tone of the diffuse French prose romances among which he found his sources, and is due without question to his own ability as a raconteur. Perhaps his most noticeable characteristic is his facility in bringing vividly before us by a few direct dramatic words the human interest of the scenes that he is describing. For example, the tragedy of Lancelot's love for Guinevere is summed up, as Professor Bruce has pointed out, in the exclamation of the knights—

"' Allas,' they sayde, 'launcelot du lake, That euyr shuldistow se the quene!'"

Almost equally moving are the words with which Lancelot seeks to defend himself from the slanders against him to which the king has listened—

"'I was nevyr far frome the, When thou had any sorow strange;'"

and the few sentences that fall from Gawain's lips as he looks on the dead face of the Maid of Ascolot convey without comment the pathos of her fate—

"' For hyr biaute with-oute lesynge
I wold fayne wete of hyr kynde,
What she was, this swete derelynge,
And in hyr lyff where she gonne lind.'"

The language of the poem offers few difficulties, but to aid readers who have only a slight familiarity with English of the fourteenth century, the meaning of obsolete words and such as may not be readily recognised in the fourteenth-century form is given in a glossary at the end of the volume. This glossary has been prepared not at all for scientific purposes, but solely with the view of presenting a practical aid to the enjoyment of the poem; deficiencies, of which I scarcely dare hope there are none, may be supplied from the more complete glossaries in the editions of the poem mentioned, from which I have drawn copiously in preparing my own explanations.

It would be profitable to dwell at length upon the central element of Le Morte Arthur, the love of Lancelot and Guinevere, and to trace, so far as our present knowledge enables us, its evolution from its early place in an independent other-world quest of Lancelot to its appearance as a prime factor in the destruction of the Round Table and the death of Arthur. Our two poems form the best possible illustration of the development of the story of Arthur's death from an event in chronicle history to the tragic culmination of a romance. But it would lead us far beyond our space here to review the material that fills the gap existing between the final lament of Arthur on the battlefield in the Morte Arthure. "I for a traitor have lost all my true lords. Here rests the rich blood of the Round Table overthrown by a rebel," and the words of Queen Guinevere in her farewell to Sir Lancelot in Malory: "Through this man and me hath all this war been wrought and the death of the most noblest knights of the world; for through our love that we have loved together is my most noble lord slain."

LUCY ALLEN PATON.

FLORENCE, June 1912.

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II

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# NOTE

The Edition of the "Morte Arthure" used here is that of Miss Mary M. Banks, whose notes and glossary were of great service to me.

ANDREW BOYLE.

January 1912.



# MORTE ARTHURE

HERE begins Morte Arthure in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen for charity's sake. Amen.

Now may great glorious God through His own grace and the worthy prayers of His good Mother shield us from shameful deeds and sinful actions; and give us grace to so guide and govern our lives here in this unhappy world that through goodly living we may reach His Court, the Kingdom of Heaven, when our souls shall depart and be severed from our bodies, to dwell and abide for ever blissful in the presence of God himself. And may He enable me to utter words at this moment that shall be neither void nor vain, but doing honour unto God and pleasant and profitable to all folk that shall hear them.

All ye that care to listen or love to hear of men of ancient time and of their strange deeds; how they were faithful in their law and loved Almighty God, hearken unto me with favour and keep silence and I will tell you a tale both noble and true of the prince-like men of the Round Table who excelled in chivalry and were noble chieftains in their deeds; they were wise men at arms, valiant in action, holding shame always in dread; kind men and courteous were they, learned in courtly manners; how they overcame with many honourable deeds and slew Lucius the Evil who was Lord of Rome and conquered that kingdom by craft of arms. Hearken now to me and hear this story.

When King Arthur had won by conquest castles and kingdoms and many countries, and had regained the crown of that noble country over all of which Uter had ruled in his time on earth: Orgayle and Orkney and the islands of the outer sea, Ireland afar off where the ocean flows: by craft he worked hardy Scotland according to his will; and Wales he won over to serve him; Flanders and fair France were his; Holland and Hainault, Burgundy, Brabant, and Brittany, Guienne and Gothland and rich Greece were all held of him. Fair Bayonne and Bordeaux, high-towered Touraine and Toulouse he dwelt in. He was held prince of Poictiers and Provence, Valencia and Vienne, a town of great wealth—of Auverne and Anjou—those rich earldoms. By his cruel conquest he was acknowledged Lord of Navarre and Norway and Normandy too, of Germany and Austria and many other lands. He filled all Denmark from Swynn to Sweden

with dread of himself by his keen sword. When he had done these deeds he called his knights, devised duchies, and dealt out the various realms: of his friends and cousins he made anointed kings in the countries where they desired to wear the crown. When he had judged the people and set them at peace, then that royal man took rest and held the Round Table: sojourned that season to comfort himself in Britain as he loved best; thence he went into Wales with all his men, and turned aside into Swaldye with his nimble hounds to hunt the deer in those high lands; there was great rejoicing in Glamorgan. And there, with the consent and help of his lords, he built a city which was called Caerleon and had curious walls looking over the noble river that runs by so fairly: so that he might collect his people there to see them when he chose. Then afterwards this same renowned conqueror held court at Christmas in Carlisle and was acknowledged lord by dukes and knights of many realms, earls and archbishops and many othersbishops and bachelors and noble banerettes who bowed before his standard and went at his bidding. But on Christmas day when they were all assembled together, that well-favoured monarch commanded that every lord should abide there and not take his departure until the tenth day was completely at an end. Thus in royal array he held his Round Table with splendour and peace and ate strange meats: such a gathering of nobles was never held in any man's time before or since, in mid-winter in the Western Marches.

But on New Year's day at the None in the evening as the bold knights round the board were served with bread, there came in suddenly a Roman senator with sixteen knights who followed him together. He saluted the king and the concourse afterwards: king after king making his obeisance to \* all: he greeted Gaynour according to her rank and his liking: and then once more turned to her husband and disclosed his message: "Sir Lucius Iberius, Emperor of Rome, salutes thee as his subject under his noble self: this is trustworthy. Sir King, with faithful words: take it for no nonsense: his charter is here to be seen! Now on this New Year's day with the notary's signature I summon thee to do homage for thy lands, that on Lammesse day there may be no hindrance to prevent thee from being ready at Rome with all thy Round Table to appear in his presence with all thy noble knights at the first hour of the day, in pain of your lives, in the renowned Capitol before the king's self when he, with his senators, will be seated as pleases them best: that thou mayest answer only why thou holdest the lands which owe homage of old to him and his elders: why thou hast judged and taken over the rule and ransomed the people, killing his cousins the anointed kings. There shalt thou give reckoning for all thy Round Table why thou art rebel to Rome and withholdest their dues. If thou refusest this summons he sends thee these words: he shall sail over the sea with sixteen kings, burn Britain and slav all thy knights and in great wrath bring thee tamed as a beast whither he listeth, for thou shalt have neither road nor resting place under high heaven, though thou for fear of Rome runnest to the earth: for if thou fleest to France or Friesland thou shalt be brought back by force and overthrown for ever. Thy father did fealty we find in our rolls in the register at Rome, as all may see who look aright: without further delay we ask this tribute which Julius Caesar won with his gentle knights."

The king looked upon the man with his keen eye that fiercely burned with wrath like a blazing coal and cast flashes as he with angry gestures glared like a lion and bit his lips. The Romans with great fear fell to the ground in dread of his countenance—as if they were doomed to die: they crouched like dogs before the king, for his gaze seemed to affright them. Then up rose a knight and cried aloud. "O king, crowned by rightful descent, courteous and noble, entreat no messenger spitefully, for thy honour's sake, for we are in thy power and crave mercy of thee. We abide with Sir Lucius who is Lord of Rome and he is the most wonderful of men of this earth: we can but do his will, we

come at his command, excuse us thus." Then spoke the conqueror with cruel words: "Ha, craven knight—thou seemest a coward! There is a man in this hall and he is sorely grieved that thou darest not for all Lombardy look upon him once."

"Sir," said the senator, "as Christ is my help, the sight of thy face hath wounded us all! Thou art the lordliest man that ever I looked on. In appearance thou truly seemest

to be a lion!"

"Thou hast summoned me," quoth the king, "and hast said what thou likedst: this I will endure for the sake of thy sovereign. Since I was crowned king of the land and anointed with precious oil never was there one who spake to me so boldly as thou hast. But I shall take counsel that kings anointed take of dukes and noble knights and reverend doctors, of peers of the Parliament, prelates and others of the richest men of the Round Table: thus shall I ask advice of my valiant barons and act according to the wisdom of my wise knights: to waste our time in idle words were little honour nor to burst out wilfully in great wrath. Wherefore thou shalt stay here with and rest with thy lords-this sen'night in peace—to give your horses a spell and see what manner of life we lead in these low lands." Then by the royalty of Rome that ever was the richest, he commanded Sir Cayous "take charge of those lords-dispose of those valiant men as their estate required, so that they might speedily be lodged in those high chambers and afterwards served in the dining hall as was meet: see that there was no lack of fodder for their horses-nor wine, nor honey, nor any luxury on this earth: spare nothing for any delicacy, but spend what thou likest, that there may be largesse aloft and nothing wanting. If thou lookest to my honour why then, by my troth, thou shalt have reward full great that shall avail thee for ever."

Now were they led alone and treated nobly by courteous men within these high walls; in chambers with fire places they changed their garments and then the chancellor brought them down with great courtesy. Soon the senator was seated as seemed well to him at the king's own board; two knights indeed served him alone as it were Arthur himself, in great pomp on the right hand of the Round Table: for

this reason that the Romans were treated with as much honour as they were of the most royal blood on the face of the earth. There came in at the first course before the king himself—boar-heads that were borne on burnished silver by skilful men arrayed in rich garments—a company of royal blood sixty in all. Well seasoned flesh of deers though it was not the season, with excellent frumentee for them to choose from and delightful fowl, peacocks, and plovers in golden plates, porcupines that had not been weaned: then herons concealed full fairly in their plumage: great swans swiftly followed in silver chargers: turkey tarts that whoever wished might taste: delicious gumbalds delightful to eat: after this came wild boars' shoulders and sliced flesh: geese and bittern in dishes filled with pastry: and by their side were young hawks dressed in bread that were best of all. with swine breasts beautiful and white. Then came the delicacies to satisfy men afterwards: in waves of blue and gleaming they seemed, and the dishes were piled up full high one on the other so beautiful that all men were delighted at the sight thereof. Then came cranes, curlews craftily roasted, rabbits beautifully browned in sauce, and pheasants decked with ornaments on bright silver dishes covered with a yellow glaze with custards and many dainties: then claret and Cretan wine were carefully poured out from curiously carved vessels of bright silver: Osay and Algarde and others withal. Rhenish wine and Rochell, better wine than which never was: delicious vernage from Venice and Crete through golden taps-for whoever wished to taste. The king's cupboard was inlaid with silver, and goblets over-gilt stood upon it glorious of hue: there was a chief butler-a noble knight-Sir Cayous the Courteous-who filled the cupssixty cups he laid before the king-craftily carved and curious -set all over with precious stones-that no poison might privily be put into them, for then the bright gold in wrath would break to pieces, or the venom would lose its power by virtue of the stones. And the conqueror himself was neatly arrayed and clad in fine golden colours with his knights, crowned with his diadem on the rich dais, for he was deemed the doughtiest man that dwelt on earth. Then the conqueror spake kindly to those lords and cheered the Romans with royal words. "Sirs, be ye knightly of countenance and

comfort ye yourselves! we know naught in this country of curious meat nor any other breads are there in these barren lands; wherefore, I pray you, endeavour without feigning the more to satisfy yourselves with such poor food as ye find before you." "Sir," said the senator, "so help me Christ, there reigneth no such royal feast within Rome's walls: there is no prelate, pope, or prince of this earth but might be well satisfied with these goodly meats."

After their feast they washed and went to the hall, each glorious conqueror with many knights. Sir Gaywayne the worthy led Dame Gaynour with Sir Ughtred on the other side—who was lord of Turry. Then they scattered rich spices unsparingly around and Malvesy and Muscatel, those wonderful drinks they poured out swiftly in the russet cups of all the nobles in order, Romans and others. But the sovereign, truly, for his own pleasure assigned to the senator certain lords to lead him to his retinue when he wished, with mirth and melody of noble minstrelsy. Then the conqueror to hide his cares with the lords of his following that were his own bodyguard—jovially wended his way to the Giant's Tower—with justices and judges and gentle knights. Sir Cador of Cornwall spake to the king and laughed at him lustily with merry gestures.

"I thank God for that fierce threat that threatens us! Thou must be drawn to Rome I trow unless thou treatest better. These letters of Sir Lucius lighten my heart: we have as losels lived many a long day, with delights in this land and many lordships and have diminished our renown for which we sought. I was abashed, by our Lord, at our best barons for their great lack of deeds of arms. Now art thou awakened once more—may Christ be praised! and

we shall win it again with force and strength."

"Sir Cador," quoth the king, "thy counsel is noble, but thou art a marvellous man with thy merry words—for thou reckonest no case nor considerest any matter but hurlest forth thy words at thy chief as thy heart chooseth. I must treat of a truth with this matter, and talk of these tidings which trouble my heart. Thou seest that the emperor is angered somewhat: it seemeth by his messengers that he is sorely grieved: his senator hath summoned me and said what he chose here within my hall, with hateful words hath

despised me and spared me little: for rage I could not speak so did my heart tremble. He ask tyrannically tribute of Rome from me, that was grievously destroyed in the days of my forefathers: these aliens, in the absence of all men-atx arms, won it from the commons as the chronicles relate. have a right to ask tribute of Rome, my ancestors were emperors and it was payed to them—Belyn and Bremyn and Bawdewyne the third; they held the empire eight score winters—each heir after the other—as old men relate: they conquered the Capitol and cast down the walls and hanged their head men by the hundreds at one time; then Constantine our kinsman conquered it afterwards who was heir of England and Emperor of Rome-he that won in battle by craft of arms the cross on which was crucified Christ, who is King of Heaven. Thus have we evidence to ask this emperor who reigns at Rome what right is it to which he lays claim."

Then answered King Aungers to Arthur himself, "Thou shouldest be over lord to all other kings for thou art wisest, worthiest, craftiest of hand and knightliest of council that ever bore crown. I can well say for Scotland that we suffered wrongs of them when the Romans reigned; they exacted ransom from our elders and rode about in riot and ravished our wives and bereft us of our goods without right or reason. And I to Christ devoutly take my oath and to the holy vernicle noble and good that I of the great wrong shall be avenged upon those evil men with valiant knights. So I shall furnish you with fifty thousand men-at-arms of reasonable fighting age to follow thee in my pay whithersoever thou wilt to fight with thy foemen that entreat us unfairly."

Then the stout Baron of Brittany counsels Sir Arthur and beseeches him to answer the strangers with sharp words, to invite the emperor to cross over the mountains. He said, "I verily make my oath to Christ and to the holy vernicle that I shall never be absent for fear of any Roman that reigns on earth. But I shall be ever ready in array and found ready, no more do I fear the dint of their dreadful weapons than the dank dew when it falleth to the earth: no more shall I shun the sweep of their sharp swords than the fairest flower that grows in the earth. I shall bring to battle thirty thousand mailed knights skilful in arms within a month in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Belinus and Brennius.

whatever land that thou mayest assign whenever thou choosest."

"Ha! Ha!" saith the Welsh king, "blessed be Christ! Now shall we avenge full well the wrong of our elders. In West Wales I wisse such evil they wrought that all might weep for sorrow who think upon it. I shall certainly lead the vanguard myself until I am revenged on the Viscount of Rome, that wrought me a villainous deed at Viterbe once as I past by in pilgrimage to Pontremoli. He was in Tuscany at that time and seized our knights, stopped them unrightly and exacted ransom of them: I shall certainly assure him that we may never become reconciled but till we meet in earnest by ourselves and deal each other deadly blows with our dread weapons. And I shall hire for this two thousand valiant knights from the Isle of Wight and Wales and all you Western Marches—mounted and accoutred the bravest men of all those western lands."

Sir Evan FitzUrience—he was cousin to the conqueror and a man of great courage—then eagerly inquires: "Sir, when we know your will we will act according to it, if this determination should hold and be not adjourned any further we would take our way to the ships whenever thou wishest."

"Cousin," quoth the conqueror, "thou speakest kindly: if my counsel agree to conquer you lands, then by the kalends of June we shall encounter them with many a bold knight so may Christ help me! Thereto make I my vow devoutly to Christ and to the holy vernicle so virtuous and noble, I shall at Lammesse take leave to linger at large in Lorraine or Lombardy whichever I think best, I shall go unto Milan and down the valleys of Petra Santa, Pisa and Pontremoli, and in the vale of Viterbe victual my knights: I shall sojourn there six weeks to take rest and send horsemen to the rich town and plant my camp there, but if they proffer battle the peace will come in the process of time."

"Certes," said Sir Ewayn, "and I next avow if that I ever see with my eyes that man who holds thy heritage, the empire of Rome, I shall be bold to touch his eagle that is borne on his banner of rich bright gold and tear it from his fierce men and rend it asunder: but he is readily equipped with riotous knights, so I shall increase thy force in the field with fresh men-at-arms fifty thousand folk mounted on fair

steeds to go against thy foemen where it is most meet in France or in Friesland whithersoever thou choosest."

"By our Lord," quoth Sir Lancelot, "this lighteneth my heart. I praise God for the love these knights have avowed. Now many lying men have leave to say what they will for there is no let or hindrance by law, but listen to these words. I shall now be in action with gentle knights on a swift steed full gallantly caparisoned and before any one begin to joust with him among all his giants Genyvers and others shall strike him straight from his steed by the strength of my arm for all the fierce men of battle that abide in his army. Arrayed with my retinue, I reck but little to make route for Rome with my fierce knights within a week: with six score helms I shall be seen on the sea, sail when thou likest."

Then laughs Sir Lottez and speaks aloud: "It pleaseth me Sir Lucius longs for sorrow: now that he desires his woe shall begin: it is our fate to avenge the wrongs of our forefathers! I make my vow to God and to the holy vernicle, when I may see the Romans that are esteemed so valiant, arrayed for battle on a round field, I shall, for reverence of the Round Table, ride through all the troop, rearguard and others, to make a pathway through them and spacious room, running with blood as my steed rushes forward. He that follows my path and comes after me first shall find in my track many a livid dying knight." Then the conqueror kindly comforts these knights and commends them greatly for these lordly avowals. "All-powerful God reward you all and may you never be wanting to me while I reign in this world. My honour and manhood ye maintain on this earth and my reputation afar off in other kings' lands. My weal and good name ye have knightly asserted throughout the rich land that belongs to my crown. He needs no foes to fear who leads such folk, but may be ever ready to fight wherever he listeth. I account all kings for naught that live under Christ, while I see you around me I set naught by them."

When they had taken counsel earnestly, they trumpeted up after and went down to a dance of dukes and earls: then they assembled in the hall and supped together—all this seemly company with full noble appearance. Then the royal king encourages these knights with reference to come and feast at his Round Table: when seven days were past,

the senator asks the answer to the emperor with grievous words. After Epiphany when the opinion was taken of the peers in Parliament with prelates and others, the king in his council, courteous and noble, brings forth the strangers

and answers them himself:-

"Greet well Lucius thy lord, and hide not these words from him if thou art a loyal liegeman, let him know soon that I shall at Lammesse take leave and lodge at my ease in his lands with many lords, reign in my royalty, pass where I will and hold my Round Table by the river Rhone, capture all the farms in those fair realms for all the menace of his might and despite his wrath, and thence shall I march over the mountains unto his vast lands to marvellous Milan and cast down its walls; in Lorraine and Lombardy too I shall not leave any man of any kind alive who observes his laws there: then when I think fit, I shall pass into Tuscany, ride through those spacious lands with riotous knights. Bid him make preparations for the sake of his honour and send out to meet me his manhood in these wide lands. I shall be found in France search when he will, on the first day of February in those fair marches. Ere I be fetched by force or forfeit my lands the flower of his fair folk shall be left at the point of death. I shall most certainly assure him under my seal that I shall lay siege to the city of Rome within seven winters and besiege it so thoroughly on all sides that many a senator shall sigh on my account. My mandate is issued and thou art to be fully served with conduct and credence to go when thou likest: I shall assign resting places for thy journey and enjoin them myself from this place to the post where thou shalt pass over: I set at the most seven days to Sandwich-it is not much-sixty mile a day-the sum is but little-thou must speed thy journey with thy spurs and spare not thy horse; thou must go by way of Watling Street and by no other way. There thou night after night must needs stay, be it forest or field thou must go no further, tie thy horse to a bush with its bridle even, take thy lodging under a tree as seemeth best to thee, for no foreigner should travel by night with such a ribald troop to revel with thee, thy licence is limited in the presence of lords. Let there be no reluctance or hesitation if thou thinkest wisely, for upon it lies thy life and limb, though Sir Lucius hath

given thee a lordship of Rome; for if thou be found a foot within the limits of the shore after the eighth day when undern is rung thou shalt be beheaded forthwith and torn asunder with horses and afterwards hung on high for dogs to guard thy flesh: the rents nor red gold that belongs to Rome shall not then suffice to ransom thyself."

"Sir," said the senator, "so help me Christ! An I might depart hence with honour, I should never for any emperor on this earth, henceforward go unto Arthur with such a message. But I am here alone with sixteen knights: I beseech you, sir, that we may depart hence safe and sound: if any unlawful wight molest us by the way with thy

permission, Lord, thy honour is impaired."

"Fear nought," quoth the king, "thy conduct is well known from Carlisle to the coast, there thy ship awaits thee; though thy coffers were full and crammed with silver, thou mightest be quite at ease with my seal for sixty miles further." They bowed to the king and asked the leave to depart, went out of Carlisle and seized their horses, Sir Cadore the Courteous pointed out to them their way, and conveyed them to Catterick and committed them to the care of Christ: so they sped on with their spurs their horses which sprang forward save when they lay under a tree when the light failed: but ever the senator in truth sought out the shortest way. Before the seventh day was gone they reached the city; with all the joy under God never were they so glad as with the sound of the sea and the bells of Sandwich. Without further delay they shipped their weary horses and to the wan sea they went all together: with the men of the wall they weighed up their anchors and fled at the high tide and rowed towards Flanders, and through Flanders they went as they best thought to Aix-la-Chapelle in Germany among Arthur's Lands, climbed over Mount St. Gothard by difficult paths, and so unto Lombardy pleasing to see. They turned through Tuscany with its towers full high, and dressed themselves in goodly garments and valuable robes: on the Sunday they rested their horses at Sutri and sought the saints of Rome by the assent of knights, then they hastened to the palace with its rich portals, where waits Sir Lucius with many lords, bow to him lovingly and offer him letters of credence enclosed with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Between nine and twelve in the morning.

knightly words. Then the emperor was eager and asks him anxiously the answer of Arthur, how he defends his kingdom and rules his peoples, if he be rebel to Rome and what right he claims. "Thou shouldest have seized his sceptre and sat above him for the reverence and royalty of noble Rome: by certes, thou wast my messenger and senator of Rome, he should with ceremony have served thee himself."

"That will he never do for any man in this rich world save him who can win it in war by mightiness of arm: many dead shall there be left in the battlefield ere he appear in this place, attempt it when thou wilt. I tell thee, sir, Arthur is thine enemy for ever and intends to be overlord of the Roman Empire that all his ancestors owned save Uter himself. Thy message I bore myself there this new year. Before that noble king with nine other kings in the most royal place of the Round Table I summoned him solemnly in the sight of his knights. Since I was born, truly I was never so affrighted in all the places through which I passed of princes of this earth; I would forsake my rank of seigneury in Rome ere I would be sent with such a message to that sovereign again. He may be chosen chieftain, chief of all others both in matters of arms and noble chivalry for the wisest, worthiest, and mightiest of arm of all the men I wot of in this rich world. He is held to be the knightliest man in Christendom of kings and conquerors crowned on this earth—the comeliest of countenance, courage, fierce manners, and knighthood that lives under Christ. He may be mentioned for his largessea despiser of silver, he recks no more for gold than for great stones, nor more for wine than water that flows from the well, nor for the wealth of this world—but for honour alone. Such a countenance was never known in any rich country than was with that conqueror when he held his court. counted at this Christmas full ten anointed kings at his table who sat with him. He will wage war I ween, take notice if it please thee, hire thy men-at-arms and guard thy marches. that they be ready in order and everything in preparation: for if he reaches Rome he will conquer it for ever. I warn thee, prepare thyself therefore and wait no longer, be sure of thy mercenaries, and send to thy mountains by the quarter of this year and withstand him, forcibly he will bravely on his way hie in a while."

"By Easter," said the emperor, "I intend myself to wage war in Germany with armed knights, and send boldly into France that is the flower of kingdoms, set out to fight that man and forfeit his lands: for I shall set keepers full cunning and noble and many giants from Genoa full brave jousters to meet him in the mountains and slaughter his knights, to strike them down in ranks and destroy them for ever. A watch tower shall be built on Mount St. Gothard that shall be garnished and kept by good men-at-arms and a beacon above to burn when they choose so that no enemy with a host may enter the mountains: there shall be built on Mount St. Bernard another tower furnished with banerettes and noble bachelors. In through the gates of Pavy shall no prince pass through the

perilous places by reason of my brave knights."

Then Sir Lucius sent lordly letters one to the east with bold knights to Ambygane and Orcage and Alexandria too, to India and Armenia by which the Euphrates runneth, to Asia and Africa and to all Europe, to Uritayne and Elamet and all those outer isles: to Arabia and Egypt, to the earls and others that held any land in these eastern marches of Damasca and Damietta and to dukes and earls. For fear of his danger they got ready soon: the honourable kings of Crete and Cappadocia come at his commandment, without delay: when the tidings come to Tartary and Turkey, there come in from Thebes full huge warriors—the flower of the fair folk of the Amazon's land-all that fail to come to the field are forfeit for ever! The noble knights of Babylon and Bagdad, barons with their following, delay no longer. Each prince of Persia, Pamphile, and Prester John's land comes with his retinue fitly caparisoned. The Sultan of Assyria assembled his knights from Nylus to Nazareth in huge numbers. To Garyere and Gallilee they came all at once the sultans who were firm fighters for Rome. They voyaged over the Greek Sea with grievous weapons and glittering shields in their great galleys. The King of Cyprus on the sea awaits the sultan with all the nobles of Rhodes drawn up with him. They sailed with a side wind over the salt sea, when suddenly the Saracen kings, as they thought best, bring their ships ashore at Corneto sixty miles distant from the city of Rome. By that time the Greeks were ready a very great number the mightiest men of Macedon with the men of those marches, Apulia and Prussia send other throngs, the liegemen of Lithuania with many legions. Thus they assembled in companies full huge in number sultans and Saracens from their own lands: the Sultan of Assyria and sixteen kings assembled together at the city of Rome.

Then comes forth the emperor armed in might with his Romans arrayed and upon fine horses: sixty giants in front, engendered by fiends with witches and warlocks to guard his tents where ever he might go for winters and years. No horse might bear them—those lusty churls—but camels—beasts of burden armed in mail. He went out with his foreign troops—full many hosts—even unto Germany which Arthur had conquered, he rides in by the river and revels on the way and goeth with a good will through all those high lands. He wins all Westphalia by war without difficulty and draws in by the Danube and dubs his knights, besieging castles in the county of Coloigne and sojourneth that season there

with many Saracens.

Eight days after Hilary Sir Arthur himself in his noble council commands the lords "go to your countries and assemble your knights and await me at Cotentin arrayed full fair: wait ye at Barfleur upon the smooth flood, boldly on board with your best barons: I shall honourably meet you in those fair marches." He sends forth suddenly sergeantsat-arms to all his mariners one after the other to collect ships for him; within sixteen days his fleet was assembled at Sandwich on the sea to sail when he chose. He held a parliament in the palace at York with all the peers of the realm, prelates and others, and after the prayers in the presence of the lords, the king in his council spake these words: "I am of a purpose to pass through perilous ways to go with my brave men to conquer those lands, to overthrow my enemy if chance will so have it-who holds my heritage the empire of Rome. I leave you here a sovereign, if ye will agree thereto—who is my kinsman—my sister's son -Sir Modred himself shall be my lieutenant with great lordship over all my faithful liegemen who guard my lands." He spake to his cousin then in the counsel forthwith: "I make thee keeper, Sir Knight, of many kingdoms the honourable warden to rule all my lands that I have won in this fair earth by war. I decree that Gaynour, my wife, be held in

great honour, that she may want no wealth or luxury she may wish for: see that my castles be fairly arrayed—there she may sojourn herself with dutiful barons. See that my forests be spared in friendship for ever, that none harry my wild beasts save Gaynour herself, and that in the season when grees 1 is assigned she take her choice at certain times. Chancellors and chamberlains change as thou choosest. auditors and officers ordain thou thyself, and also juries and judges and justices of the lands: see that thou punishest such as work evil. If God's will has destined that I should die, I appoint thee my executor, chief of all others, to minister my household goods for the good of my soul to beggars and unfortunates fallen upon evil times: take here my testament full of treasure which I entrust to thee: betray thou me never! As thou shalt answer before the awful judge that all this world will call to judgment when he chooseth, see that my last wish be loyally performed. Thou hast the entire charge of all that belongs to my crown, of all my worldly goods and my wife also. Look that thou keepest thyself honourable so that there will be no complaint when I return to my country, if Christ will permit it: and thou shalt then have grace to govern well land of thine own, I shall crown thee, knight, king with my own hands."

Then Sir Modred himself speaks full mildly, kneeling to the conqueror and utters these words, "I beseech you, sir, as my kinsman and lord that you will for charity choose another one: for if you put me in this plight, your people are imposed upon to present a prince power to one of my simple estate. When others are honoured hereafter for warcraft then, in truth, I shall be set at nought. To go in your presence was my purpose with all the necessary

accourrements for my valiant knights."

"Thou art my nephew of near kinship, my foster-child of old, whom I have disciplined and chosen, a child of my chamber, for the position of my representative, forsake not this office, but work thou my will, thou knowest what it means."

Now he takes his leave and abideth no longer, bidding farewell to his lords and liegemen that he leaves behind him. And then that worthy man went to his chamber to comfort

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The distribution of the fat of deer among sportsmen.

the queen that was in great distress: Gaynour weakly weeping kisses him, talks to him tenderly with many tears.

"I may curse the man that caused this war that deprives me of the honour of my wedded lord, all that I love in life now leaves the land and I am left in languor believe me for ever! Why might I not, dear love, die in thy arms, am I thus to endure this destiny of dole by myself?"

"Grieve thee not, Gaynour, for God's love of heaven, nor grudge my going for it shall turn to good. Thy distress and weeping wound my heart, I had rather not know of this grief for all the rich world: I have made a keeper, a knight of thy ? own, overlord of England under thyself, and that is Sir Modred whom thou hast much praised, he shall be thy dictator to do what thou desirest." Then he look leave of his ladies in waiting, kissing them kindly and commends them to Christ, and then she swoons full length when he asked for his sword, twice in a swoon as if she would faint. He hastened to his palfrey in the presence of his lords, and spurs his horse away from the palace with his valiant knights, with a royal troop from the Round Table, and made way to Sandwich; she sees him no more! Then the great men were assembled with gallant knights, garnished in the green field and fitly arrayed; dukes and knights ride daintily and earls of England with many archers, the sheriffs sharply gather together the commons to the great men of the Round Table, each assigns a county to certain lords in the south on the sea-shore to sail when they choose. Then they seek boats and row to the shore, bring the horses on board and fearful helmets, they pack in bravely steeds covered with trapping, tents and other gear and buckskin shields, cabins and clothesbags and right noble coffers, horses and hacks and armoured horses, thus they load up the belonging of the brave knights.

When all that should be shipped was shipped they delayed no longer but spread their sails to the wind lightly as the tide was running, ships of war and small craft, across their masts at the king's command outspread their sails. Swiftly from the ocean they weighed their anchor; by the strength of the mariner from the ocean's waves. Men before the prow coil their cables in small ships and boats and Flemish craft, then hoist up the sails and turn the helm, they stand on the starboard and bravely sing. The fine ships of the port try

their depths in the sea and ride with filled sails over the sparkling waves. Altogether without harm they haul in the boats, the shipmen sharply shut their gates, a man springs to the helm and they take the depths of the sea, they look to the lodestar (compass) when the light fails, they choose their way by knowledge when the clouds rise with the needle and the stone on the night tides. For fear of the darkness of night they tarry a little, and by reason of the fierceness of the current they struck their oars. The king was in a great boat with full many knights enclosed in a cabin and neatly arrayed, and within on a rich bed rested a little and with the murmur of the sea fell a-dreaming. He dreamed of a dragon -dreadful to behold-which came rushing over the deep to drown his people, even walking out of the western land wandering wickedly over the ocean waves. Both his head and his neck were marked all over within waving lines of blue and enamelled full fairly. His shoulders were scaled in bright silver-covered all over was the dragon with shrinking points; his belly and his wings were of wonderful hues, in marvellous coats of mail he mounted full high: whomsoever he touched was destroyed for ever: his feet were garnished all in fine sable and such a venomous flare flew from his lips that the sea seemed all on fire with the blasts. Then came from the east against him a black fierce bear above in the clouds with each paw like a post and full huge palms with perilous claws that seemed all curved, hateful and hated and rugged and with his curved legs looked hideous, dreadfully matted of hair with foaming lips—the foulest beast he was that was ever formed—he reared with out-thrust tongue and pranced around: to battle he got ready with his fierce claws, he roared and howled so that the earth trembled so roughly he smote it and rushed forth to ravage. Then the dragon came from afar against him and with his fierce blows drove him away in the sky: he flies like a falcon and strikes freely: he with his feet and fire he fights at once. The bear in the battle seemed bigger than him and bit him boldly with his baleful tusks: such buffets he gives him with his broad claws that his breast and belly were blood all over. They sprang so roughly that all the earth split asunder and red blood ran like rain from heaven. He had wearied the serpent by the power of his might were it

not for the wild fire with which the dragon defended himself. Then away flew the dragon to the height and came gliding down from the clouds and smites him fully, seizes him with his talons and tears his back which from head to tail was six foot long. Thus he destroyed the bear and took away his life, let him fall in the sea to float whither he might. So they seemed to the bold king on board ship so that he near burst for grief on the bed where he lay. Then the wise king awoke sorely troubled in his mind and sends for two philosophers who followed him, ever the most subtle to be found in the seven sciences, the most cunning in wisdom known under Christ. He told them of his anxiety what time he slept. "Troubled by a dragon and such a direful beast that caused me great wrong: tell me my dream or I must die at once as our Lord knoweth." "Sir," said they soon after, these wise philosophers, "the dragon that thou dreamedst of, so dreadful to behold, that came rushing across the deep to drown thy people, truly and certainly it is thyself that thus saileth over the sea with thy valiant knights. The colours that were cast upon his clear wings may be thy kingdoms all that thou hast rightly conquered: and the tattered tail with such long ends stands for thy fair knights that belong to thy fleet. The bear that was destroyed above in the clouds stands for the tyrants that torment the people or else that some day there shall be a single battle between thyself and some giant and thou shalt have the victory through the help of our Lord as thou wast clearly shown in thy vision. Then dread no more this dreadful dream, and doubt not, Sir Conqueror, but comfort thyself: and these that sail over the sea with thy valiant knights."

At the trumpet call then speedily they trim up their sails and row over the fair sea—all this company together: they soon reach the comely coast of Normandy and happily at Barfleur these bold knights arrive: they find a fleet there of many friends the flouts and fair folk of fifteen realms, for kings and captains awaited him faithfully as he himself had commanded at Carlisle last Christmas,

When they had reached the shore and raised their tents, a templar came and informed the king, "Here, too, is a tyrant that torments thy people, a great giant of Genoa engendered by fiends, he hath devoured more than five hundred people and also many infants and free-born children. This hath been his sustenance now for seven winters and yet is the glutton not sated so well it pleaseth him. In the country of Cotentin no people has he left outside the strong castle enclosed within walls-for he has completely destroyed all the children of the commons and carried them to his crag and devoured them there. The Duchess of Brittany he has taken to-day near Reynes as she rode with her fair knights, led her to the mountain where he abideth, to lie with that lady while her life lasts. We followed afar off more than five hundred barons and citizens and noble bachelors, but he reached the crag: she shrieked so loud: the horror of that creature I shall never forget. She was the flower of France or of five realms, and one of the fairest that was ever formed. the gentlest jewel accounted by lords from Genoa to Geron by Jesus of Heaven! She was thy wife's cousin, as thou mayest know, and sprung from the noblest race that reign in this earth. As thou art a righteous king, take pity on thy people and endeavour to avenge them that are thus affronted."

"Alas," said the king, "so long as I have lived had I known of this it had been well: it has not happened fairly but fallen foul that this fiend hath destroyed the fair lady. I had leifer than all France this fifteen winters that I had been before that fellow a furlong away when he laid hold of that lady and led her to the mountains, I had left behind my life ere she had suffered harm. But can you tell me the crag where lives that man? I will go to that place and speak with him, to deal with that tyrant for treason to his lord and make a truce for a time till it may happen better."

"Sire, see ye yon foreland with yonder two fires? there lurks that fiend—ask when thou mayest, upon the crest of the crag by a cold well that encloses the cliff within its clear stream: there wilt thou find dead folk without number, more florins i'faith than in all the rest of France, and more treasure hath that traitor unlawfully got than there was in Troy, I

trow, what time it was conquered."

Then the noble king sighed for pity of those people, went right to a tent and rested no longer, he welters and wrestleth with himself and wringeth his hands—there was no wight in the world that knew what he wanted. He called Sir Cayous that served him with the cup and Sir Bedvere the

bold that bore his great brand.

"Look to it that after evensong ye be armed full well and mounted on horses by yonder thicket—by yon blithe stream, for I will pass privately in pilgrimage that way at suppertime when the lords are served to seek a saint by yon salt streams on St. Michael's Mount where miracles are seen."

After evensong Sir Arthur himself went to his wardrobe and took out his clothes—he armed him in a jerkin with a rich golden fringe, and above that laid a jeryn of Acre right over, and above that a coat of gentle mail—a tunic of Jerodyn with edges frayed. He drew on a bacenett of burnished silver—the best that was in Basill with rich borders: the crest and the crown enclosed so fair with clasps of bright gold adorned with stones—the visor and the aventail equipped so fair without a flaw, with eyelets of silver: his gauntlets gaily gilded and engraven at the borders with grains and balls of most glorious hue: he bore a broad shield and calls for his sword, he jumped on a brown steed and waits on the heath. He rises in his stirrups and stands aloft, he strains himself stoutly and looks forth, then he spurs the bay steed and rides to the thicket and there his knights await him gallantly arrayed.

Then they rode by that river that runneth so swift where the trees overstretch with fair boughs, the roe and the reindeer run recklessly there in thickets and rose-gardens to feast themselves. The thickets were in blossom with may-flowers, with falcons and pheasants of fair hues—all the birds lived there which fly with wings, for there sang the cuckoo full loud on the bushes, with all birds of merriment they gladden themselves: the voice of the nightingale's notes was sweet, they strove with the throstles three hundred at once, that this murmur of water and singing of birds

might cure him of ill who never was whole.

Then move these folk quickly and alighted on foot and fastened their fair steeds afar off; then the king sternly told his knights to abide with their horses and come no further, "For I will seek this saint by myself and speak with this master man that guards this mountain, and then shall ye partake of the Sacrament one after the other honourably at St. Michaels full mighty with Christ!"

The king climbs the crag with cliffs full high, to the top of the crag he climbs aloft; lifts up his umbrer and looks about him keenly, receiving the cold wind on his face to comfort him; two fires he finds flaming full high-for a quarter of a furlong he thus walks between them: along the way by the well he wanders on to get to know of the warlock and where he abides. He moves to the port fire and even there he finds a very woeful widow wringing her hands and weeping with painful tears on a grave newly marked in the soil since midday it seemed. He saluted her sorrowfully with becoming words and straightway asked after the fiend. Then this woeful widow joylessly greets him, rose up on her knees and clasped her hands saying: "Unhappy man, thou speakest too loudly; if you warlock heareth he will devour us both. Cursed be the wight that directed thee hither, that made thee to travel here in these wild parts. I warn thee for thy honour thou seekest sorrow. Whither hastenest thou, man? thou seem'st unhappy, goest thou to slay him with thy bright sword? Wert thou wightier than Wade or Wawayn thou shouldest win no honour. I warn thee beforehand: thou crossedst thyself unsafely to seek these mountains; six such as thou were not sufficient to cope with him alone. For an thou seest him alone, thy heart will fail thee to cross thyself safely, so huge he seemeth.

"Thou art noble and fair and in the flower of thy manhood, but thou art doomed already by my fay and that I foretell thee. Were there fifty such as thee in the field or on the fair earth—the monster with his fist would fell you all. Lo! here the dear duchess—to-day was she taken—deep buried and dead in the ground—he murdered this mild lady e'er midday was rung—without any mercy I wot not why—he hath forced and defiled her and she is left dead, he slew her churlishly and slit her to the navel, and here have I embalmed her and buried her afterwards. For the grief of this incurable woe I shall never be happy again. Of all the friends she had none followed after her but I, her fostermother of fifteen winters: to move from this foreland I shall never attempt, but shall be found in this field till I am left

dead."

Then answers Sir Arthur to that old wife: "I am come from the conqueror courteous and noble, as one of the

most noble of Arthur's knights, a messenger to this vile wretch for the benefit of the people, to speak with this master man that guards this mountain: to treat with this tyrant for the treasure of lands and to make truce foretime till it may turn out better."

"Fie, thy words are but wasted," quoth that wife then, "for he sets but little by both lands and people. Nor of rents of red gold he troubles, but he will break the law when he chooses himself, without the permission of any, as lord

of his own.

"But he hath a mantle which he keeps for himself that was spun in Spain by special women and afterwards adorned in Greece full fairly: it is covered all over with hair and embroidered with the beards of valiant kings, woven and combed that knights may know each king by his colour, in his home there he abides. Here he seizes the revenues of fifteen kingdoms each Easter evening, however it so happens that they send it themselves for the safety of the people-at that season with certain knights, and he has asked Arthur all these seven winters. Therefore he herds here to outrage his people until the King of Britain has fed his lips and sent his beard to that bold monster with his best knights: unless thou hast brought that beard go thou no further, for it is bootless that thou shouldst stay for aught else: for he has more treasure to take when he likes than ever had Arthur or any of his forefathers. If thou hast brought the beard he will be more pleased than if thou gavest him Burgundy or Britain: but take care for love's sake that thou keep thy lips silent so that no word escape from them whatever betides; see that thy present be ready and trouble him but little, for he is at his supper and will be easily angered. And now take my advice and remove thy clothes and kneel in thy mantle and call him thy lord. He sups all this season on seven children of the commons, chopped up on a charger of pure white silver with pickles and finely ground spices and wines of Portugal mixed with honey. Three luckless damsels turn his spits awaiting his bed-time his bidding to do: thus four will be dead in four hours ere his lust be sated which his flesh yearnest after."

"Ha! I have brought the beard," quoth he, "for thus it pleaseth me, forth then will I go and bear it myself. But,

pray, if thou wilt tell me where this monster abideth, I shall commend thee an I live so help me our Lord!"

"Go straight to the fire," quoth she, "that flames so high: there lurks that fiend as thou wilt discover: but thou must go somewhat to the south, sidling a little, for his power of

smelling extends over six miles."

The source of the smoke he sought speedily, crossed himself safely with certain words, and going to the side he caught sight of the fiend as she said unseemly supping alone. He lay at full length reposing foully, the thigh of a man's limb he lifted up by the haunch, his back and the lower parts and his broad loins he baked at the dreadful fire, and he was breechless: there were roasting full rudely dreadful meats of men and cattle bound together, a large pot crammed with anointed children some spitted like birds and women turned them.

And then this comely king's heart was sorely grieved because of his people at the place where he stood. Then he girded on his shield and hesitates no longer, he brandishes his bright sword by its bright hilt, goes forth to the fiend with a rough determination, and loudly hails that giant with fierce words:

"Now may Almighty God that ruleth us all give thee sorrow and trouble, thou glutton, that liest there for the foulest monster that was ever formed—foully thou feedest thyself—the devil take thy soul! Here is unclean quarry, fellow, by my troth—refuse of all creatures—thou cursed wretch, because thou hast killed anointed children thou hast made martyrs and taken away the lives of those who are broached here on spits in this place and slaughtered by thy hand. I shall work thee thy punishment as thou greatly deservest, by the might of St. Michael who guardeth this mountain: and for this fair lady that thou hast left dead and thus forced to the earth for thy own lust; gird thyself, thou son of a dog, the devil take thy soul, for thou shalt die to-day through the force of my arm."

Then was the glutton dismayed and glared unseemly; he grinned like a greyhound with grisly teeth; he gaped and groaned aloud with grievous gestures for wrath with the good king who spake to him in anger. His hair and his forelock were matted together and hung before his face for about

half a foot. His brow and forehead were all like the skin of a frog and seemed freckled, hooknosed like a hawk and a fierce bird, and hairy round his hollow eyes with overhanging brows: rough as a dog-fish-hardly could he be seen, so was he hid in that mass of hair: ears he had full huge and ugly to see, with horrible eyes and burning withal: flat-mouthed like a flounder with grinning lips, and the flesh in his front teeth as foul as a bear. His beard was rough and black and reached to his breast, fat like a porpoise with a huge carcass, and the flesh still hung in shreds from his foul lips, like gold in a wolf's head it writhed out at once! Bull necked was that giant and broad of shoulders, with a streaked breast like a boar with long bristles. Rough arms like oak-branches with gnarled sides—limbs and loins right hateful to see, believe ye in truth; shovel-footed was that man and he seemed to straddle, with unshapely shanks shuffling together: thick thighs like a giant and thicker in the haunch—fat as a hog, full terrible he looked. Whoever might reckon faithfully the full length of this man, from the face to the foot, he was five fathoms long.

Then he started up sturdily on two stiff shanks and soon caught up a club of bright iron. He would have killed the king with his keen weapon, but through the wisdom of Christ, the carle failed. The crest and the coronal and the silver clasps cleanly with his club he crashed down to the earth.

The king raises his shield and covers himself completely, and with his fierce weapon reaches him a blow, right full in the face he struck him so that the burnished blade reached to his brains—he wiped his face with his foul hands and strikes fast at Arthur's face fiercely thereafter. The king changes his foot, and withdraws a little, had he not escaped that blow he had fared evil: he follows up fiercely and strikes a blow high up on the haunch with his hard weapon, that half a foot of the weapon is hidden in the flesh: the monster's hot blood runs down the hilt, even to the entrails he strikes the giant, right to the genitals and slashed them in twain.

Then he groaned and he roared and roughly strikes full eagerly at Arthur, and on the earth strikes a sword's length within the sward, he smites at once so that the king nearly swooned from the force of his blow. But yet the king nimbly and swiftly strives, he smites with the sword so that

it smashed the giant's loins; both the guts and the blood gush out at once so that it makes all the ground slimy on which he stands.

Then he cast down his club and seizes the king—on the top of the crag he caught him in his arms and enfolds him securely to crush his ribs: so tightly holds he him that his heart is near to bursting. Then the doleful damsels fall down on the earth, kneeling and crying and wringing their hands, "Christ deliver yonder knight and keep him from

grief, and never let that fiend take his life."

Yet the warlock is so mighty that he crushes him under, fiercely they wrung and wrestled together, they weltered and wallowed on those rushes, they tumble and turn about and tear their clothes—roughly from the top they tumble down together, Arthur sometimes on top and sometimes beneath—from the crest of the hill right down to the hard rock—they cease not until they reach the brink of the sea. But Arthur with his dagger smites the giant until it sinks right up to the hilt in him. The thief in his death-struggle grasped him so fiercely that three ribs in the king's side were thrust asunder.

Then Sir Cayous the Keen, moved in sorrow for the king, said, "Alas, we are undone, my lord is overthrown—fallen down with a fiend—it is all over! We must be forfeit and banished for ever." They lift up his hauberk and feel beneath—his stern and his haunches, too, right up to his shoulders, his flanks and his loins and his fair sides, both his back and his breast and his bright arms. They were glad when they found no flesh wounds, and for that they were joyed, these gentle knights.

"Now certes," says Sir Bedvere, "it seemeth by my Lord! He seeketh saints but seldom, wherefore he grips the tighter that thus seizes this saint's body out of these high cliffs, to carry forth such a man to clothe him in silver. By Michael, of such a fellow I have great wonder than ever our Sovereign Lord should suffer him in Heaven: if all saints be such who serve our Lord, I shall no saint be ever, by my

father's soul!"

Then laughs the bold king at Bedvere's words—"This saint have I sought, so help me our Lord! Wherefore draw out thy sword and pierce him to the heart; make certain of

this fellow, he hath angered me sorely. I have not fought with such a wight these fifteen winters, but in the mountains of Araby <sup>1</sup> I met such another. He was the strongest by far that I ever met, and had not my fortune been favourable, dead would I be now. Anon strike off his head and put it on a stake, give it to thy squire, for he is well mounted: bear it to Sir Howell, that is in sore straits, and bid him take heart, for his enemy is destroyed: then bear it to Barfleur and fasten it on iron, and set it on the barbican for men to see: my sword and my broad shield lie upon the moor on the crest of the crag where first we fought, and the club thereby all of bright iron, that hath killed many a Christian in the land of Contentin: go to the foreland and fetch me that weapon, and let us go back to our fleet where it lays in the water. If thou wilt have any treasure, take what thou likest: I will have the mantle and the club, I covet naught else."

Now they go to the crag, these comely knights, and brought him the broad shield and his bright weapon, the club and the cloak too. Sir Cayous himself goes with the conqueror to show the kings whom the king had with him in secret, while bright day climbed up above through the clouds. By that time a great noise was there at the court, and in front of the comely king they kneeled all together, "Welcome, our liege lord, too long hast thou fought, our governor under God, ablest and most noble, to whom grace is granted and given at his will. Now thy happy arrival hath comforted us all, thou hast in thy royalty revenged thy people. Through help of thy hand thine enemy is destroyed that overcame thy people and reft them of their children: never was there kingdom so readily relieved of its troubles."

Then the conqueror speaks Christianlike to his people, "Thank ye God," quoth he, "for his grace and no man, for man's deed it never was but His own might, or a miracle of His Mother's, who is so mild to all." He called then the boatmen sharply at once to hasten with the speed.

shift the goods.

"All that great treasure which the traitor won, see it be given to the commons, clergy, and others of the country; see it be dealt out to my dear people so that none may

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Wales.

complain, under penalty of your lives." He ordered his cousin with knightly words to build a church on the rock where the body lay, and a convent therein for service to Christ, in memory of that martyr who rests in the mountain.

When Sir Arthur the king had killed the giant, then blithely from Barfleur he sets out in the morning, with his troops in battle array; by the smooth streams towards Castle Blank he picks his way through fair country under chalk hills. The king tries a ford over the smooth bed of the river—he crosses with his fair folk over as he wished: forth steps that bold man and unfolds his tents on a fortified place by the stream in that lowland.

Anon after midday in the meanwhile there came two messengers from the distant marches from the marshal of France, and greet him honourably, beseeching him for

succour, and spake to him these words-

"Sir, thy marshal thy minister beseeches thy mercy, of thy great majesty, for the deliverance of thy people, of these march-men, who are thus assailed and attacked from time to time. I tell thee that the emperor has entered France with hosts of enemies horrible and huge: he burns in Burgundy thy rich cities and destroys thy people who live therein. He attacks fiercely by craft of arms the countries and castles that belong to thy crown: he dismayeth thy commons, clergy, and others: unless thou succourest them, sir king, they shall never recover. He felleth many forests, ravages thy lands, leaving no place of refuge, but frighteneth thy people. Thus he destroys thy people and takes away their goods. Strange to relate, the French tongue is thought to be dead. X He draws now into fair France, as the Germans tell us, aided by his dragons dreadful to behold: they put all to death by blows of their swords, dukes and knights who tarry therein. Wherefore the lords of the land, ladies and others, pray thee for the love of Peter the Apostle of Rome, since thou art present here, that thou wilt make war on that perilous prince in the process of time. He goes by yonder hills under those tall woods, tarrying there with great strength of his heathen kings; help us now for His love who sitteth high in heaven, and talk sharply to them, that thus destroy us."

The king bids Sir Boice, "Go thou quickly! take with thee

The king bids Sir Boice, "Go thou quickly! take with thee Sir Berill, and valiant Bedvere, Sir Gawayne and Sir Gryne,

those valiant knights, and proceed ye to yonder green woods and settle this business; say ye to Sir Lucius that his actions are unlordly thus wickedly against all law to treat my people. I shall prevent him if my life fails me not or ought remains, and many shall fall who now follow him over land. Command him fiercely with bold words to go out of my kingdom with his fair knights; in case that he will not, that cursed wretch, to come with his bold knights and encounter me at once. Then shall we reckon full soon by what right he claims thus to lay waste this realm, and exact ransom from the people, there shall it rightly be settled by force of arms, Almighty God at doomsday shall deal as he thinketh fit."

Now they prepare them to go, these gallant knights, all glittering in gold, upon great steeds towards the green wood, that with keen weapons they may greet well the great lord

who soon will be sore afflicted.

These courteous knights halted on a hill, by the edge of the wood, and beheld the habitations full high of the heathen kings, they heard in those quarters full many hundred horns of elephants blown right loudly, pavilions proudly bedecked which were striped with rich colours of purple and gold with precious stones; streamers and ornaments were placed in

the open field for the people to see.

And then the Romans had arrayed their rich tents along by the river under the hills around, the emperor for his honour was set even in the midst, his tent adorned with fair eagles beautiful to see. And they saw him and the sultan with many senators proceed towards the hall with sixteen kings and creep softly in sweetly alone to sup with their sovereign on rich rare meats. Now they wend their way over the water these honourable knights through the wood to that tent where these men abide just after they had washed and gone to the table; Sir Gawayne that worthy knight thus fiercely speaks he:—

"May the might and the majesty that bestoweth honour to us all, that was apportioned and made through the might of Great God, work evil to your throne, sultan and others, that are here assembled in this hall, may ye be set at strife one with another! And that false heretic that calleth himself emperor and holdeth by false right the Empire of Rome, which is in truth the heritage of Sir Arthur that honourable king, for it was held by all his ancestors save Uter alone, that same curse which fell on Cain for his brother's sake cleave unto thee, thou cuckold, thou sittest there with thy crown the unlordliest wight that ever I looked upon!

"My lord marvels greatly, man, by my troth, why thou murderest his men who work no evil, commons of the country, clergy, and others who are not blamable therein nor skilful in arms. Wherefore our worthy king, courteous and noble, commands thee boldly to depart from his lands, or else for the honour of thy knighthood to encounter him at once: since thou covetest his crown, declare thou it openly! I have discharged my duty here, challenge it who will before all thy chivalry, chieftains and others. Shape us then an answer and shuffle thou no longer, that we may depart at

once and give answer to my lord."

The emperor answered with bitter words, "Ye are my enemy, Sir Arthur himself; it is not honourable for me to maltreat his knights, though ye be wrathful men who go at his call. But say to thy sovereign, I send him these words, were it not for the reverence I owe to my noble table, thou shouldst repent thee of thy wrathful words for such a ruffian as thou to rebuke any lord arrayed with his retinue full royal and noble! Here will I sojourn as long as I think fit and thereafter proceed along by the Seine at my own pleasure; to besiege all the cities by the shores of the salt sea, and then will I ride in by the Rhone that runneth so fairly, and of all his rich castles I will cast down the walls; I shall leave naught in Paris in the course of my time, not a spot shall be left for him though he do his utmost."

"Now, certes," quoth Sir Gawayne, "I marvel greatly that such a poltroon dare speak such words! I had rather than all France, which is the chief of all realms, fight with thee openly on the field by ourselves." Then answers Sir Gayous right boastful words (he was uncle to the emperor and an earl himself), "Ever were these Britons braggers of old! lo! how he boasts him in his beauteous garments! Yet he breaks out with much bragging this boy who stands

here!"

Then was Sir Gawayne full angered at these scornful words, and rushes towards the knight with a wrathful heart; with his steel brand he smites off his head, and springs out to his

horse and rides away with his following. Through the guards they went these valiant knights, and find in their course full many a man. Over the water they went by the strength of their horses and took wind as best they could by the edge of the wood. Then follow boldly many Romans both on foot and mounted on fine steeds, and they chased across the country our chivalrous knights till they came to a thick forest; now they were mounted on chalk-white horses. But a wight dressed in fine gold and adorned with sable came foremost on a Frisian horse in garments full bright; a fair lance he flourished and set in his rest and followed after our men eagerly calling after them.

Then Sir Gawayne the Good upon a grey steed grips a great spear and strikes him fairly; right through the body he smites him so that the ground steel glides through his heart. The man and great horse lie on the ground groaning piteously through the soreness of his wounds. Then hastens up a horseman, full proudly arrayed in garments of purple embroidered with silver: boldly on a brown steed he dashes forward. He was a pagan of Persia that thus pursued. Sir Boys unabashed prepares to meet him, with a powerful lance he thrusts him through so that the brave knight and his broad shield lie prostrate on the field, and he draws forth his sword and springs to his fellows.

Then Sir Feltemour, a man of might and great repute, was moved to great anger and rode up threatening. He advances on Sir Gawayne to punish him speedily for the death of Sir Gayous who was smitten to the ground. Then Sir Gawayne was glad; against him he rides, with Galuth his good sword he strikes him readily; the knight on his courser he cleaved

asunder; cleanly from the crown his corse he splits in twain, and thus he kills the knight with good weapon.

Then a nobleman of Rome returned to his fellows, "We shall repent it full sore if we ride further; you men are bold jousters that work us such evil, it befell him full foul who named them so first."

Then the valiant Romans turn back their horses and seek their tents in sorrow, telling their lords how Sir Marschalle de Mowne is left on the mount overcome in that joust for all his great skill. But still our men are followed by chivalrous knights five thousand folk upon fair steeds fast to a forest over deep waters that flow from the vellow sea fifty mile distant. There were some Britons ambushed and noble banerettes of the excellent chivalry of the king's chamber. who see them chase our men and charge their horses and cut down chieftains whom they honoured greatly. Then the ambushments of Britons broke out at once hastily under their leader with Bawdwyne's knights, they are stopped by the Romans who ride by the forest, all the noblest men who follow Rome; they hasten after the enemy and strike out eagerly, these earls of England, calling on Arthur's name. Through breastplates and bright shields they pierce to the heart, Britons of the boldest with their bright swords. Then were the Romans down-ridden and roughly wounded, arrested as rebels by riotous knights. They are cast at once into great disorder, routed they ride away for fear as it seemeth. To the Senator Peter a messenger has come and said, "Sir, surely your men have been taken by surprise." Then straightway he assembled ten thousand men and set upon ours suddenly by the salt sea. Then were the Britons taken aback and grieved somewhat, but yet the bold banerettes and noble bachelors resist that attack and ride forward on their horses. Sir Boys and his bold men work much evil among the enemy. The Romans took counsel then and drew up their forces better and all burst through our men with their strong horses, they make prisoner some of the most valiant knights of the Round Table, ride down our rearguard and sorely distress them.

Then the Britons abide on the field no longer, but they flee to the forest and leave the field; Sir Beryll is borne down and Sir Boys is taken, the best of our bold men are severely wounded. And still our army in their stronghold are troubled in spirit and sorely dismayed by the strokes of those fierce knights, and they lament for their king on whose name they called, beseeching God for succour at his

good will.

Then cometh Sir Idrus armed at all points with five hundred men upon fair steeds; they ask at once of our folk if their friends be afar off who came upon the field. Then quoth Sir Gawayne, "So help me God! we have been chased to-day and bandied about like hares, repulsed by Romans on their gallant steeds, and we lurked under shelter like downcast wretches. No more shall I look upon my lord during the days of my life that we who love him well should serve him ill."

Then the Britons hastily turn their horses and boldly to battle they ride upon the field. All the fierce men they boldly see before them departing unto the wood to rest themselves. The Romans then readily array themselves along the broad field once more and dress their weapons by the fair river and call together their people; with vigour

Sir Boys is resisted.

Now they assembled at strife by the salt sea; earnestly these valiant men address their blows, with their fair lances aloft they struggle together, in lordly Loraine on prancing steeds. Then were men thrust through with keen weapons, gasping full piteously with grievous wounds, great lords of Greece were sorely afflicted; swiftly with swords they strike about them, smiting down full nimbly fainting knights, on the field they lie swooning while the knights sweep over them. Sir Gawayne the Gracious full readily worketh, the greatest he greets with grisly wounds, with Galuth he smites down right gallant knights, for revenge of the great lord so grimly he strikes. He rides forth royally and readily thereafter where that noble man was held for a prisoner; he cleaves his way through the ranks of steel and smites their coats of mail and bereft them of that noble man and rode to his succour. The Senator Peter then pursued after him through the crowd of the people with his bold knights; openly for the prisoner he proveth his strength with the proudest horseman that belonged to his array. Fiercely on the left hand he strikes Sir Gawayne, with a weapon of iron he smithed him sorely, the coat of mail on the back he bursteth asunder, but yet for all their fierce warriors he rescues Sir Boys.

Then the Britons boldly blow their trumpets for joy that Sir Boys was rescued from captivity, boldly in battle they beat down the knights, with swords of strong steel they cut through the mail coats. They strike through the horses in the battle with steel weapons and attack all fiercely who come against them. Sir Idrus FitzEwayn then called aloud "Arthur," and dashed on the senator with sixteen knights of the boldest men that belong to our side. Suddenly

in a crowd they set in at once, thrusting fiercely at the breastplates with glittering swords and fight fast at the front full vigorously thereafter, many fell on the field at the far side, dead on that fair field by the fresh sea shore.

But Sir Idrus FitzEwayn rides up himself and enters into combat and strikes out eagerly; he seeks the senator and seizes his bridle, fiercely he spake to him these bold words, "Yield thee, sir, swiftly, if thou thy life lovest, for gifts thou mayest give, thou shalt have back thy freedom; if thou indeed givest any trouble or use any wiles, thou shalt die this day by the force of my hand." "I assent," quoth the senator, "so may Christ help me an I be brought before the king's self; affix me a fair ransom that I can afford

according to my rents at Rome and readily pay."

Then answers Sir Idrus with stern words, "Thou shalt have conditions appointed thee as the king desireth, when thou art come to the country where he holds his court; lest his counsel be to keep thee no longer but have thee killed at his command before all his knights." They led him through the troops and took off his armour, leaving him with Sir Lionel and Lowell his brother. In battle in that land by the silent sea shore Sir Lucius' liegemen are lost for ever; the Senator Peter is taken prisoner, full many knights of Persia and Joppa and many commons withal perished on the field, being driven by the heavy attack into the water. There might men see many Romans ruefully wounded ridden down by the knights of the Round Table. Along the road through the wood they turn their bridles that ran ruddily all over with blood, they lead in the rear full many a bold knight to be ransomed with red gold and noble steeds; suddenly they pause and rest their horses, then in a band to their noble king they ride at once.

A knight gallops on before and tells the king, "Sir, here come thy messengers with joy from the mountains, they have been matched to-day with the men of the marches, struggling in battle with marvellous knights. We have fought in truth by yonder fresh sea shore with the doughtiest men that belong to thy foe. Fifty thousand fierce men-atarms within a furlong's distance lie wounded unto death. We have avoided defeat, through the grace of our Lord, from the chivalrous men who charge down upon thy people.

The chief Chancellor of Rome, a chieftain full noble, will ask of thee a charter of peace for his own sake. And Senator Peter is taken a prisoner, and many pagans of Persia and Joppa come riding in the rearguard with thy valiant knights, their penalty to suffer in sorrow in thy prisons. I beseech thee, sir, to say what thou wilt do, whether thou wilt suffer them to depart in peace or be delivered unto prison.

"Ye may charge for the senator sixty horses loaded with silver before Saturday to be surely paid, and for that noble cavalier the chief chancellor chariots loaded chockful with gold; the remainder of the Romans are held in arrest until their rents in Rome be rightly ascertained. I beseech you, sir, make known to you lords whether ye will send them over the sea or keep them here yourself. And all your fair men in truth are thought to be sound save Sir Ewayne

FytzHenry who is wounded in the side."

"Christ be thanked," quoth the king, "and His fair Mother who have helped and comforted ye with craft of arms. Dreadful discomfiture He dealeth as He will, none may escape His wrath or flee from His hands; fate and strength in deeds of arms are held and dealt as God Almighty will. I acknowledge thanks for Thy coming, He comforteth us all. Sir Knight," quoth the conqueror, "as Christ is my salvation I give thee for a gift fair Toulouse the toll and the taxation thereof, taverns and other places, the town and its tenements, with towers so high that belong to its temporalty while my life lasts.

"But say to the senator I send him these words, no silver shall save him unless Sir Ewayne recover; I had rather see him sink in the salt sea than that my man were sick that is so sorely wounded. I shall divide that company, as Christ is my salvation, and sit them in solitude in many kings' lands: he shall never again see his seigneuries in Rome nor sit in the assembly by the side of his fellows. For it becometh not a king who is held conqueror to discuss with his captives for covetousness of silver; it becometh not knighthood as he may know to carp in bargaining when captives are taken; neither ought prisoners to intreat their lords nor come into the presence of princes when agreements are made. Command you constable that guardeth the castle that he be

carefully kept and held in bondage; he shall have orders to-morrow at morn or midday by the bell to what march they shall go to remain in captivity." They convey this captive with fair men-at-arms and take him to the constable as the king biddeth: and afterwards they go to Arthur and relate to him the emperor's answer who was wrathful in deeds. Then Sir Arthur the noblest man of all on earth at eventide at his own table praised his lords, "I ought to honour them on earth above all others that thus in my absence wage my war; I shall love them while I live as God is my salvation! and give them lands full large where best they choose; they shall lose nought in this matter while my life lasts who are thus injured for my love by the smooth sea." But at the clear dawn this noble king himself commanded Sir Cadore with his fair knights Sir Cleremus, Sir Cleremonde with fine men-at-arms, Sir Cloudmur, Sir Clegis to convey these lords; Sir Boys and Sir Berell with banners displayed, Sir Bawdwyne, Sir Bryane, and Sir Bedevere. The rich Sir Raynalde and Sir Rickett, the sons of Rawlaunde, to ride with the Romans in company with their fellows.

"Ride now urgently to fair Paris with Peter the prisoner and his valiant knights; commit them to the provost in the presence of lords on pain and peril that appertaineth thereto that they be wisely watched and held in guard. Let them be guarded and guaranteed by honourable knights; grant him strong men and seek ye no silver; I have warned that

man to have great care!"

Now depart these Britons as the king biddeth them, seeking their weapons and displaying their banners; towards Chartris they ride, these chivalrous knights, and in the open country they avoid capture; for the mighty emperor had ordained himself and ordered Sir Utolfe and Sir Ewandyre, two honourable kings, earls of the east, with fierce knights of the most daring men that belonged to his host, Sir Sextynour of Lybya and many senators, the King of Assyria with many Saracens, the Senator of Sutere with great numbers, were assigned to that court to be sent by their peers, and they go towards Troyes to work treason, for they would entrap with a train our travelling knights that had set out to take Peter to Paris to prison with the provost to spend his time in captivity; wherefore they went on the way with banners

displayed in an ambush in his way on war horses full huge: they planted them in his path arrayed in all their power to

take away the prisoners from our valiant knights.

Sir Cador of Cornwall commands his peers, Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremus, Sir Cleremownnde the noble, "Here is the mountain pass of Clyme with cliffs so high: see that the country be clear, the hiding places are many: look now carefully through the brushwood and other parts that there be no dangerous bodies of troops to harass us hereafter: look ye to your arrangements that no ill befall us, for no surprise party hiding in the brushwood is ever discomfited."

Now they hie to the wood, these fierce knights, to see whether there be any men in hiding against their lord; they find them all helmed and mounted on steeds lingering on the highway by the edge of the wood. With knightly countenance Sir Clegis himself cries to the company speaking these words, "Is there any valiant knight, a prince or some such other, who will show for his king's sake his craft of arms? We are come from the king of this rich realm, who is known as the conqueror, crown on earth, we are his mighty retinue all of his Round Table, to ride with our royal master wherever he will; we now seek jousting in war if any man will come forth of your lustiest men adjudged to be lords; if there be any noble man here earl or another that for the emperor's love will encounter me himself." And an earl then soon answered him in anger, "I am wrath at Arthur and his noble men that thus wrongly occupy these realms; outraging the emperor his earthly lord. The honour and renown of the Round Table is spoken of in anger in full many realms; such a command he holds of our Roman rents that he shall soon give ransom if it go well with us, so that many shall repent who ride now in his company for that this reckless king so rules his affairs." "Ah," quoth Sir Clegis then, "as Christ is my salvation! I know by thy manner of speech thou seemest an accountant, but be thou auditor or earl or emperor thyself, on Arthur's behalf I answer thee That man is so noble who ruleth us all, the violent men and noble of the Round Table, he has made up his account and read all his rolls, for he will give a reckoning that all the rich men of Rome shall rue and repent thereafter ere the arrears be requited of the rents that he claims. We

crave of your courtesy the course of war and claims of knighthood, take care of yourselves! Ye do but waylay us with wileful words, such things to travelling men were treachery methinks. Send out then straightway certain knights or tell me the simple truth, deny me if you will." Then quoth the King of Assyria, "As God is my salvation,

Then quoth the King of Assyria, "As God is my salvation, if thou tarriest all the day thou shalt not be delivered unless thou certainly give assurance with certain knights that thy coat and breast be known among lords, by the arms of thy

ancestors known among men."

"Sir king," quoth Sir Clegys, "full knightly thou askest: I trow it be for cowardice that thou speakest these words, my arms are of ancestry well known among men, and have been borne on a banner since the time of Sir Brutus; at the city of Troy when it was besieged it was oft seen in combat with certain knights, for Brutus brought us with all our bold ancestors to Britain on board ship."

"Sir," says Sir Sextenour, "say what thou likest, and we shall suffer thee as it seemeth best to us; see that thy trumpets be packed up, and trifle no longer, for though thou tarry all day, it will betide thee no better; for there shall never a Roman that rides in my company be rebuked by a rebel while I reign in this world." Then Sir Clegis bows a little to the king and goes to Sir Cadore, and tells him knightly, "We have found in yon wood, adorned with leaves, the flower of the fairest folk that belong to thy foe, fifty thousand folk all fierce men-at-arms, that are couching their lances in front under yon fair boughs. They are ambushed on steeds with banners displayed in yon beechen wood upon the wayside, they have barred the way to the ford of fair water, those men whom to-dehoves by force to fight us to death; for thus it haps to-day, and thou must shortly choose whether we show as a present bettle?"

shortly choose whether we shun or engage battle."
"Nay," quoth Cadore, "as Christ is my salvation, it were a shame that we should shun battle for such a trifle; Sir Lancelot shall never laugh, who stays with the king, that I should be stopped on my way for any man upon this earth. I shall be dead and undone ere I hold back for

dread of any dog's son in you dim thicket."

Sir Cador then knightly comforts his people, and with keen courage he speaks these words, "Think of the valiant prince that sets us in possession of lands and lordships wherever we choose; that has dealt out to us dukedoms and dubbed us knights, given us gifts and gold and many rewards, greyhounds and great horses and sports of all kinds that are of benefit to any man that lives under God. Think of the fair renown of the Round Table and let it never be taken from us for any Roman on earth. Flinch not now faintly nor spare ye your weapons, but see that ye fight faithly and boldly yourselves. I should be boiled alive and quartered asunder unless I carry this victory while I am thus wrath."

Then this doughty duke dubbed his knights, Ioneke and Askenere, Aladuke and others who were sons of Essex and all those east marches; Howell and Hardelfe, fortunate in arms, Sir Heryll and Sir Herygall those fierce knights. Then the leader gave orders to certain lords Sir Bawdwyne and Sir Beryll, Sir Bedwere the noble, Raynallde and Recherre the

sons of Roland-

"Take charge of this prince with your bold knights and if we in the conflict come out the better, stand ye here in this place and stir no further, but if it should so hap that we be downridden, fly ye then to some castle and find help for yourselves; or ride to our noble king if ye can find opportunity and bid him come speedily to rescue his men." And then the Britons hastily seized their shields, pulled on their helmets and couched their lances. Thus he drew up his men and rode to the field five hundred in a line all armed with lances. They go with trumpets and horses adorned with trappings, with cornets and clarions and beautiful notes. They break into a charge hesitating no longer. The woods are fair with the brightness of their arms on the edge of the field, and then the Roman host retreats a little, they go to the rearward before these noble knights; so swiftly they ride that all the host ring with the sound of weapons and bright steel and rich gold mail. Then shot out of the thicket many troops with sharp weapons; the King of Lebe leads in the vanguard and all his loyal liegemen to the open ride out. Then this cruel king couches his lance and takes an armoured horse and holds his course towards Sir Berell and fiercely strikes at him; through the gullet and throat armour he pierces him. The man and his great horse lie on the ground and he cries aloud on the name of God and gives up his soul. Thus was Berell the bold bereft of his life and now awaits his burial as he had offtimes chosen. And then Sir Cador of Cornwall was sorrowful in heart, because of his kinsman who was thus destroyed. He embraces the body and kisses him often; he gets ready to keep him covered with his bold knights. Then laughs the King of Lebe, and calls aloud, "Yon lord has alighted: I like him the better for it; he shall injure us no more to-day, the devil have his bones!"

"Yon king," said Cador, "hath killed our brave fellow. Christ have his soul. He shall have poor reward as Christ is my salvation! ere I leave this coast we shall encounter; an if the wind be fair I shall requit him ere even truly him-

self or some of his companions."

Then Sir Cador the keen full knightly he acts crying, "For Cornwall," and couches his lance rides straight through the troop, on his gallant horse; many a man he felled by the strength of his arm. When his lance was sprung he speeds him full eagerly striking out with a sword that never betrayed him, making gaps in the ranks, and wounding knights; he works his course through and hews the mightiest necks asunder, so that blood runs wherever his horse rides. So many men this bold knight bereft of life, striking down tyrants and emptying their saddles; then he turns out of the tumult when he thinks time. Then the King of Lebe cries full loud to Sir Cador the keen with cruel word, "Thou hast won honour, and wounded knights! thou knowest for thy strength the world is thy own, I shall wait on thy hand, man, by my troth! I have warned thee well, beware if thou wilt!" With horns and clarions these newmade knights hearken unto the cry and couch their lances; in the first line of battle on iron-grey steeds come fifty knights at once, they shoot through the troops and shivered their lances and of that company laid low many lordly knights. And thus nobly our new men use their strength, but anon come new matters that grieve me sore.

The King of Lebe has seized a steed that pleased him well, and comes in lordly armour with lions of silver; he surrounds the company, and parts it asunder; many men with his lance he deprives of their lives, and he chases the young men of the king's chamber, and kills on that battle-

field chivalrous knights, with a hunting spear he strikes

many down.

Sir Alyduke was slain and Sir Achenor was wounded, Sir Origge and Sir Ernyngall hewn all to pieces, Leweyn and his brother were captured by the lords of Lebe and led to their stronghold: had not Sir Clegis come and Clement the noble our new men had gone to nought and many more too.

Then Sir Cador the keen couches a keen and cruel lance and rides at the king, hitting him high on the helmet with his hard weapon so that all his hot blood runs down to his hand. The fierce heathen king lies upon the heath and of his deadly wound he was never healed. Then Sir Cador the keen cries full loud, "Thou hast had fit reward, Sir King, may God give thee sorrow, thou didst kill my cousin, but now I care not, cool thyself then in the clay, and take comfort therein! Thou scornedst us full long with thy scornful words and now hast thou fared so, it is thy meet punishment! Thou hast taken thy hold, it harms thee but little, for a

heathen is home-bred, gainsay it who will."

The King of Assyria then is sorrowful in heart for the sake of this sovereign who was thus surprised, he assembled his Saracens and many senators: they made a fierce onslaught upon our brave knights. Sir Cador of Cornwall encountered them soon with his fair company strongly arrayed; in the front of the wood to which the path leads fifty thousand men were felled at once. At this assembly certain knights there were sore wounded on either side; the strongest Saracens that were of that company were thrown behind their saddles six feet distant, they cut down in that army many a shielded knight, men they speared through their shrinking mail. Through braided coats of mail with metal limbs they pierced, bright arm guards they burst asunder; bloody shields and horses they hew to pieces and with swords of bright steel the prancing steeds. The Britons fiercely slav so many the moor and the broad field all run with blood. By that time Sir Cador the keen had conquered a captain; Sir Clegis presses in and seizes another—the captain of Cordewa under the king himself who was ruler of all that fair country-Utolfe and Ewandre had taken Ioneke with the Earl of Africa and other great lords.

The King of Assyria, that keen knight, had now yielded himself to Sir Cadore and the Seneschal of Sotere to Segramoure. When the chivalry saw that their chieftains were taken, they take flight and make their way to a deep wood where they felt themselves so faint that they fell down in the bushes and ferns of the grove for fear of our men. There might men see our fair knights ride in the thickets to search for the Romans grievously wounded, they chase after the men, these fierce knights—by hundred they hew them down by the edge of the wood. Thus our chivalrous men chase the people, but a few that escaped fled to a castle.

Then the knights of the Round Table gather together again to plunder in the wood where the duke rests: they search the trees even and capture the fierce knights who in the fighting were thought to be dead. Sir Cador ordered them to be put in a waggon and covered over carefully and carried then to the king with his best knights: and he passes on to Paris with prisoners taking the provost, princes and others: he took a morsel to eat in the tower: he delays no longer, but turns quickly to the king and tells him with his

tongue-

"Sir," said Sir Cador, "an incident hath befallen us; we have encountered to-day by yon fair coast kings and emperors cruel and noble with knights and fierce men strongly arrayed. They had waylaid us in yon forest at the ford in the wood with fierce men-at-arms. There fought we in truth and thrust them with lances, on the field with thy foemen and bereft them of life. The King of Lebe is laid low and left on the field, and many of his liegemen that were of his army, other lords of strange lands are made captive. We have brought them along to live while thou permittest. Sir Utere and Sir Ewaynedyre, those honourable knights, by a great feat of arms have made captive Ioneke with the earls of the east, fierce knights of the best ancestry that can be found in the east; the Senator Barouns is captive by a knight, the captain of Cornette that cruel knight is held prisoner, and the fierce Seneschal of Sutere with these others, the King of Assyria himself and many Saracens, but of our own men there are dead on the field fourteen knights, I will conceal nothing but tell thee faithfully. Sir Berell is one, a noble bannerrette, was killed at the first encounter with

a valiant king; Sir Midoyle of Towell with his ten knights was lost among the Turkes but found in time; good Sir Mawrell of Mauncey and Maween his brother, Sir Meneduke

of Mentoche with marvellous knights."

Then the worthy king writhes with sorrow and weeps with his eyes and speaks to his cousin Sir Cador these words, "Sir Cador, thy valour confounds us all; foolishly thou hast thrown away all my best knights; to bring men into peril is not praiseworthy unless the parties were prepared and sufficiently equipped; when they were set in a strong position thou shouldst have withheld battle unless thou wouldst have me lose all my best knights for the nonce."

"Sir," said Sir Cador, "ye know well yourself, you are the king in this country and may say what you like, ye shall never upbraid me who sit at your table that I should desist for their boasting to do your bidding; when any one is set at the head of a company furnish them better then or they will be taken by surprise and destroyed in yon narrow pass. I did my duty to-day, I have fought for my lords and exposed myself to danger in my deeds for many knights; I have found no grace in thy favour but these querellous words; if I afflict myself therewith my fortune is no better."

Though Sir Arthur was angered he answered fairly, "Thou hast acted bravely, Sir Duke, with thy hands and hast done thy duty with my beloved knights; wherefore thou art deemed among dukes and earls one of the doughtiest knights that was ever dubbed. I have no issue on this earth, thou art my heir apparent or one of thy children, thou art my

sister's son whom I shall never forsake."

Then he gave orders that a table should be set in his own tent and fairly arrayed; they were ushered in with trumpets by men who have known travail in battle; they were served solemnly with rich rare meats very seemly to see on silver dishes.

When the senators had heard how it had happened, they said to the emperor, "Thy men are taken by surprise, Sir Arthur thy enemy has overcome thy lords that rode to the rescue of yon fair knights. Thou dost but waste thy time and tormentest thy people, thou art betrayed by thy men whom thou most trustest: they shall turn thee to grief and destruction for ever."

Then the wrathful emperor was angered in his heart for that our valiant men had won such honour. They go to take counsel with king and kaiser, the sovereigns of the Saracens and many senators. Thus he assembled full soon many lords and to the assembly thus he spake these words, "My heart is truly set, if that ye will consent, to go into Sexon with my valiant knights to fight with my foemen if my fortune will allow and if I may find the man within the four halves; or to enter into Awguste to seek battle and abide with my bold men within that rich city; to rest us and revel and feast ourselves, staying there in luxury with many lordships till Sir Leo be come with all his loyal knights

and lords of Lombardy to block him the way."

But our wise king is as prudent and watches his men; and wisely avoids the host by the wood and causes his fire to be trimmed flaming full high, packing them carefully and pausing thereafter. Thenafter he takes the shortest route into Sessione and at the rising of the sun divides his knights into companies; he besets the city upon all sides and suddenly sends seven great companies to surround it except in the valley where he ambushes a company. Sir Valyant of Vyleris with valiant knights before the king's face vowed great vows to vanquish with victory the Viscount of Rome. Wherefore the king encharged him whatever befall to be chief of the attack with chivalrous knights, and then speaks with his mouth to the men he most trusts, directs the centre of the army skilfully himself, he equips his footmen in the best manner, and in the front of the vanguard he sets the flower of his knights, he ordered thereafter his archers on the other side to advance in a body and shoot where they wished. He drew up in the rearguard many a noble knight with the renowned men of the Round Table, Sir Raynalde, Sir Reckett that never was afraid, the noble Duke of Rouen with many riders; Sir Cayous, Sir Clegis with fair men-atarms, these the king orders to guard the sea shore. Sir Lott and Sir Launcelotte, those lordly knights, must abide on his left hand with many legions to move in the morning time if it be misty. Sir Cador of Cornwall and his bold knights to guard the crossroad, and he plants in all places princes and earls, so that no army should pass by hidden ways. But the emperor anon with honourable knights and

earls comes down the vale to seek battle, and finds Sir Arthur with his army drawn up; and at his approach to increase his dismay our starlwart bold king awaits him on the heath with his army drawn up and banners displayed. He had surrounded the city on all sides, both the cliffs and the passes were held by fair men-at-arms, the moors and the swamps and the mountains so high are guarded by a great multitude

of men to stop him the way. When Sir Lucius perceives this he says to his lords, "This traitor has played a trick to work us this evil! he has beset the city upon all sides, the cliffs and the passes are held by his bold men-at-arms! there is no way I wis nor anything left but that we should fight with our foemen, for flee we may never!" Then that bold man draws up his men, and arrayed the Romans and his noble knights; he sends forward in the vanguard the Viscount of Rome, from Viterbo to Venice this valiant knight; he draws up fearful to behold the dragon of gold, with eagles all over and adorned with sable; he draws deeply the wine and drinks thereafter. dukes and noble peers and dubbed knights, gathered together to see the German dances and hear the music of pipes so that all who lingered in that vale could hear nothing else for the noise. And then Sir Lucius spake aloud these lordly words: "Think of the great renown of your noble fathers and the ravagers of Rome that reigned with lords and conquered all the kings that were on earth, overcoming all Christendom by craft of arms; in every campaign a victory was won and they overran all the Saracens within seven winters from Toppa to the earthly Paradise! if one kingdom be rebellious we reck little for that! it is but right and reasonable that this man should be put down! let us get ready therefore and wait we no longer, for surely without a doubt the day shall be ours!"

When these words were said, the Welsh king himself became aware of his approach for he had attacked his knights, furiously he cries in the vale with a loud voice, "Viscount of Valence thou revengeful of deeds, the vassallage of Viterbo shall be avenged to-day! for I from this place shall never go save as a conqueror!"

Then the valiant viscount with a noble cry quitted the vanguard and swung around his horse; he was furnished

with a strong shield decorated with sable, with a dragon dreadful to see embossed thereon devouring a dolphin with fearful gestures, as a sign that our sovereign should be destroyed and all our men killed with sword strokes; for there is nothing but dead folk where the dragon appears!

Then the comely king couches his cruel lance and strikes him full a span above the waist among the short ribs so that the armour gives way before the spear. The blood gushed out and spread as the horse springs forward, and he sprawls speedily forward but speaks no more. And thus has Sir Valyant kept his vow and vanquished the viscount who was held victor.

Then Sir Ewyne FytzUriene rides full ardently towards the emperor to touch his eagle; through the fierce battle he makes his way quickly, draws out his sword with a good will, then swings around speedily and rides away: he moves off with the bird in his fair hand and takes his place again

in the rank of his peers.

But now Sir Lancelot prepares to ride against Sir Lucius the lord: he rushes upon him speedily and strikes him fully. Through his paunce and armour he pierced his mail so that the proud streamer hung out of his belly while the point of the lance stood out of his haunch and hauberk half a foot; so did he pierce him with the hard weapon that it struck the steed and that stern man to the ground: then he

smote down a standard and rode back to his men.

"This pleaseth me well," quoth Sir Loth, "yon lords are settled! the issue of the battle now resteth with me and the help of my lords: to-day shall my name be cast down and my life afterwards if some of those knights who stand on yonder green are not laid low." Then strikes out this fierce knight and strains in his saddle, he strikes out in the tumult of battle on his fair steed, he falls in with a giant and thrusts him through. Full bravely this gentle knight encounters another, clearing great gaps in the ranks and wounding many a knight, striking down those who stood in his way. With the whole body of men he fights for a full furlong's distance, and fells many upon the field: with his fair weapon he vanquished and had victory over many a knight, sweeping the field and driving away whom he wished.

Then the British bowmen come forward and boldly assail with arrows the skirmishers afar off who stood in their place: with flying arrows they fight the flinching men and pierce through their fine mail with sharp arrows: and there is a cloud of arrows that fly forward from afar off and pierce the flanks of the steeds. The Germans hurl darts and with mighty thrusts they pierce through the shields: bolts that never waver they nimbly cast at knights so that they flinch before the shower of sharp arrows and the whole army wavers and shudders with fear. Then the fair steeds reared and rushed forward in panic: the whole hundred of them rearing upon their hind legs. But yet the noblest of those men, pagans and others, rattle their arms and approach to work our men ill. All their giants, engendered by fiends, march before them and join battle with Sir Jenitall and many gentle knights. With clubs of bright steel they smash at their helms, and crash down their crests, and scatter their brains; they cleave through coursers and armoured steeds, and cavaliers on chalk-white chargers they split asunder. Neither steel nor steed is there that can stand up before them, but all are stunned and down-stricken, who stand in the ranks, until the conqueror comes with his fierce knights. With a bold countenance he cries aloud: "No Britons would be thus abashed, I ween, before barelegged boys who stand on this field!"

He draws out Caliburn so brightly polished and rushes on Golapas who was most fierce, and cleaves him asunder even at the knees. "Come down," quoth the king, "and speak with thy fellows! thou art too high by half, I promise thee in truth. Thou shalt be handier anon, too, by the help of my Lord!" With that same steel brand he strikes off his head. Then fiercely in that crowd he strikes another: and thus attacks seven with his bold knights. Until sixty are so served they never cease: and thus the giants are destroyed at this encounter and attacked by his gentle lords.

Then the Romans and the knights of the Round Table draw them up in full array, with their rearguard and all men, and with heavy weapons of war they strike at their helms, and tear with hard steel the noble mail: but these gentle knights set full fairly their lances in place on their grey steeds, and thrust right deadly with their flashing

spears upon shields adorned with rich carved work. And many are left for dead upon that field and there runs forth a river of red blood. Soon on their brows the life blood is seen, swords snap in two and fainting knights lie hanging aside on their galloping steeds: there could be seen palefaced men lying wounded with aching limbs, and faces horrible to behold lying in a clotted mass of blood, smashed and disfigured by the feet of armed steeds: so lay the fairest land that ever was seen, strewn with a thousand bodies for the distance of a furlong. By this time the Romans are somewhat discomforted and withdraw hastily and face their opponents no longer: but our prince with all his men pursues them and rides over the proudest of them with his noble knights. Sir Clegis and Sir Kayous with bold men-at-arms drive and harass them to the edge of the cliff, killing them without mercy and sparing no weapon: at that first sally they fell five hundred at once. And when they find themselves beset by our fierce knights, they draw themselves up better, for they are few against many and charge with lances and thrust with spears and fight with the noblest men that belong to France. But Sir Kayous the keen couches his lance, springs on a charger and rides at a king: with a lance of Lettowe he pierces his sides so that his liver and lungs hang on the lance: the shaft shudders and shakes in the noble man: it smashes through the shield and is left in the king's body. But Sir Kayous at that moment is unfairly struck by a coward knight of that noble country: at the moment of turning the traitor thrusts him through the loins and the flank afterwards so that the cruel lance reaches his bowels which burst asunder at the force of the blow. Sir Kayous knows full well by that fierce wound that he is wounded unto death by that blow and that his life is passing away: then he draws himself up and rides on straight to avenge himself on this craven knight: "Await thee, coward," he calls to him soon and cleaves him asunder with his keen sword. "Had thou well dealt thy blow with thy hands, I had forgiven thee my death, by Christ of Heaven!" He rides to the wise king and greets him thus: "I am grievously wounded and may never recover! Work now unto me what the world requires of thee, and bring me to burial when I am dead. Greet well my lady the queen and all

the fair ladies that belong to her bower, and my worthy wife who never angered me: and bid her do honour unto my soul!"

The king's confessor came with Christ in his hands to comfort the knight and spake to him the words. The knight knelt down on his knees with a bold heart and took his Creator that comforts us all. Then the noble king cries aloud for grief in his heart and rides out on the field to avenge his death: he presses forward into the crowd and meets with a prince that was heir of Egypt in the east marches, he cleaves him asunder with Caliburn: clean through the man he cleaves so that the saddle bursts and through the back of the horse he cuts its bowels in half!

In his wrath and grief he meets with another in the midst of that mighty host that angers him sorely: again his sword crashes through the mail so that half the man falls on the field while the other half of his body is left on the horse. Of that wound, as I guess, that knight is never healed! He dashes through the squadrons with his sharp weapon, men he pierces through and smashes mail: banners he bears down and glistening shields, fiercely with the brown steel he wreaks his vengeance: wrathfully he flourishes his sword and hacks down his enemies, overthrowing knights by the force of his arm: he smites down after this thirteen more of the throng, and pressing through them again, rides back once more.

Then Sir Gawayne the Good with many honourable knights goes forward in the vanguard by the edge of the wood: and there he perceives Sir Lucius where he stands with his lords and liegemen who are his bodyguard. Then the emperor soon asks him angrily: "What wilt thou, Gawayne, do with thy weapon? I wot by thy wavering thou comest after sorrow: I shall be avenged on thy wrath for all thy great words!" He draws out a long sword and hurries on fast, and Sir Lyonell strikes him fairly on the plain: he strikes his head so heavily that he breaks the helm and lays on his skull a wound a hand-breadth wide. Thus he attacks the whole company and serves them sorely, boldly he woundeth many a worthy knight! He fights with Florent —the best of swords, till the foaming blood ran down his wrist.

Now the Romans ride up, that were routed before, and scatter asunder our men with their ready horses: for they see that their chieftain is sore wounded and they chase and cut down our chivalrous knights. Sir Bedwere was bored through with a lance and his breast cut open with a heavy sword broad at the hilt: the strong hard steel pierces to his

heart and he falls to the earth, the more is the pity!

Then the conqueror took notice and came with his strong men to rescue the noble knights of the Round Table: to fight with the emperor if he show fight: up to the eagle he rode and cried aloud, "Arthur." Then the emperor viciously strikes out at Arthur crosswise on the umberere and eagerly hits him! The naked sword wounds him sore on the nose and the blood of the bold king runs down his breast and covers with blood all his shield and bright mail! Our bold king turns his horse by the bridle and with his heavy sword reaches him a blow: through the cuirass and the breast with his bright weapon aslant he slits him from the neck down. Thus died the emperor at Arthur's hand and all his host were sore afraid thereat, for now they flee to the forest by the salt sea, the few that are left, for fear of our folk. The flower of our fierce men who were never afraid, on iron-grey steeds follow swiftly after them, and the noble conqueror cries full loud, "Cousin of Cornwall, take heed to thyself that no captain be taken for ransom of silver ere the death of Sir Kayous be cruelly avenged!" "Nay," said Sir Cador, "as Christ is my salvation! there is no king or kaiser that reigns under Christ that I shall not kill cold dead by the craft of my hands!" There might men see chieftains on chalk-white steeds chop down in the chase a noble chivalry, the richest Romans and royal kings, they burst with hard steel their ribs asunder and dashed out their brains through their burnished helms with bright swords that flashed abroad in the land.

They hewed down heathen men with hilted swords by whole hundreds along the edge of the wood. No silver might save them nor succour their lives, neither sultan nor Saracen nor senator of Rome. Then the noble knights of the Round Table come up by the river that runneth so fair: these lordly men lodge them luxuriously by the bright sea, along the side of the river: then they go to the baggage and

take what they will: camels and secadrisses and rich coffers, horses and hacks and armed steeds and the furniture and trapping of heathen kings: they drew out dromedaries from divers lands, milk-white mules and marvellous beasts: elfaydes and Arab horses and noble elephants which come

from the east, with honourable kings.

But Sir Arthur anon goes forth even to the emperor with honourable kings: lifts him up lovingly with his lordly knights and leads him to the camp where the king staved. Then heralds quickly at the command of the lords hunt up the heathen that lie on the heights: the Sultan of Assyria and certain knights and sixty of the chief senators of Rome. Then they seek out and embalm these honourable kings and enwrapped them sevenfold in rich cloth of Sendal and enclosed them in lead so that they might not decay or spoil by the heat of the sun, if so they might prevent it. Then they were enclosed in chests to be sent unto Rome with their banners above and their baggage below, so that all men, through whatever country they might pass, should know each king by his colour and the country to which he belonged. Anon on the second day early in the morning there came two senators with certain knights from the heath: bareheaded they come and barefooted over the moor with their fine swords in their hands. They bow to the bold king and offer him their sword hilts, for him to work his will, whether he will hang them, behead them, or hold them alive: they kneeled before the conqueror in their kirtles alone and with sorrowful countenance they spake these words, "Two senators we are, thy subjects of Rome, who have saved our lives by the salt sea shore, we hid ourselves in the deep forest by the help of Christ, and now we beseech thee for succour as our sovereign and lord: grant us, then, life and limb with a liberal heart for the sake of Him that lent thee this lordship on earth."

"I grant it," quoth the good king, "through my own grace, I give thee life and limb and leave to depart so ye do my bidding and bear my message honourably to Rome with which I will charge ye here before my chief knights." "Yea," quoth the senators, "that we shall be certain to perform: surely by our troth we pledge ourselves to carry thy message: we shall allow no man that lives on earth, no pope nor

potentate nor noble prince, to see thy letters: rather than

divulge it to duke or knight we shall die in agony."

Then the banerettes of Brittany brought them to the tents where barbers await them with basins in their hands: with warm water I wis they wet them full soon: then they shave these men full shapely so that these Romans may be seen to be recreant and yielded men: that is what they shave them to show, to the discomfiture of Rome. Then they speedily load these chests on camels, on asses and Arab horses they load these honourable kings: and to show honour to the emperor they load him by himself on an elephant with his eagle above. Then the king beckoned the captives and spake these words before all his bold men—
"Here are the chests," quoth the king, "go ye over the mountains: take with ye the money for which ye have yearned so much, the tax and the tribute of ten score winters that was painfully exacted in the time of our forefathers. Say to the senator that has charge of that city, that I send him the sum for him to receive how he will! But bid them never be so bold, while my blood reigns, again to fight for and claim my broad land nor to ask tribute or tax of me by any title, save this treasure which I send while my time lasts." Now they hasten to Rome by the readiest ways and kneel in the Capitol and assembly of the commons before the sovereigns and senators that guard the city: they deliver to them the treasure and chests and, as the conqueror commanded, they speak with cruel words: "We have travelled speedily to fetch this tribute the tax and the truage of fourscore winters of England and Ireland and all the outer isles which Arthur holds in the west together. He bids ye never be so bold while his blood reigns to demand Britain or any of his broad lands, nor to ask tax or tribute of him by any title whatsoever, save this treasure which he sends, while his time lasts. We have fought in France and it has ill befallen us and all our great fair army are now left for dead, no chivalry nor chieftains escaped but all were cut down in battle, such mishap has befallen us. We warn ye gather stones and strengthen your walls: ye must await sorrow and war, so beware if ye will!"

In the calends of May this took place: the renowned royal king with his Round Table on the coast of Cotentin by the

clear sea shore has overthrown the rich Romans for ever. When he had fought in France and won the field and fiercely taken the lives of his foemen, he waited now for the burial of his bold knights who in battle were killed by a thrust of the sword: he buries at Bayonne Sir Bedwere the noble: the corse of Sir Cayous the Keen is left at Caen fairly covered all over with a crystal: his father conquered that kingdom knightly by force of arms. Afterwards he stayed at Burgundy to bury more knights, Sir Berade and Baudwynne. Sir Bedwar the noble, good Sir Cador at Caen as his folk ask. Then Sir Arthur anon in the August thereafter enters Germany with all his host arrayed: he stops at Luxemburg to rest his knights with all his loyal liegemen as lord of his own. And on St. Christopher's day a council he holds with kings and kaisers and clerks and others, and he commands them keenly to cast about their wits to see how he may conquer by craft this kingdom that he claims. Then the bold courteous and noble conqueror speaks in the council these knightly words, "There is a knight in these cliffs enclosed with hills whom I have long desired to know because of his words; his name is Loraine the loval, to hide nothing from you: his lordship is very fair as men tell me. I will divide up that duchy and deal it out as I like, and afterwards settle matters with the duke if fate will allow, for the fellow hath been rebel unto my Round Table; he has aided the Romans and laid waste my lands. We shall soon reckon full carefully, if destiny permit, which of us has right to those rents by great God in Heaven! Then I will, if I choose, pass into Lombardy, and set laws in that land that never shall be broken. The tyrants of Tuscany I shall subdue a little, and talk with the temporal rulers while my time lasts. To all the pope's land shall I give protection to show my people my fair streamer of peace, for it is folly to offend our father under God, either Peter or Paul, the apostles of Rome. If we spare the spiritual powers we speed the better for it, and while we have power to deal with matters. they shall suffer naught!"

Now they speed on spurred horses, without further speech, to the march of Metz, all our manly knights, for Metz is there held as London is here as the capital of that Seigneur who is held sovereign. The king rides forth on a fair steed

with Ferrere and Ferawnte and four other knights. These seven the next day rode about the city to seek a safe place to set their engines of war. Then the crossbowmen of the city bent their bows and shot at the king with angry gestures to injure him or his horse with the hard weapon. The king flinched before no shot nor asked for a shield, but exposed himself boldly in his bright garments: he stands at his leisure and looks at the walls where they might with most success attack the men, "Sir," said Sir Ferrere, "what thou doest is folly, thus unarmed to expose thyself in all thy grandeur; in naught but thy doublet to approach this city and to show us to those within and bring shame upon us all. for if they hit thee or thy horse, we were undone for ever: therefore let us hie hence full speedily!" "If thou beest afraid," quoth the king, "I warn thee to ride back, lest they smite thee with their round weapon: thou art but a child, no wonder methinks thou art afraid if a fly settles on thy flesh! But I am naught afraid, so help me God! If such varlets be angered it grieves me but little: 'twill be long ere they wound me, I wager my head: they win no honour of me and but waste their tackle: it shall never chance through the help of my Lord that a vagabond should kill a crowned king anointed with chrism!" Then come the vanguard fierce knights, and whole battalions come riding after them: and our foragers come flying up from all sides on their irongrey steeds: then the noble knights of the Round Table draw up their knights in battle array. All the fighting men of France follow thereafter, fairly caparisoned, and stand in the front rank. Then the men sharply turn their horses to show themselves fairly in their beautiful raiment, they ride up and down in their glittering garments with their broad engraved shields and heavy helmets, with their pennons streaming, each according to his prince's colour: and they are adorned with many precious stones: their lances bear streamers and their shining shields shine like the rising sun: the whole army glittered.

They settle down before the city upon all sides and search all the surrounding neighbourhood, discovering archers and skirmishing a little: they put to flight the shield bearers and the sentinels and break down the barriers with their bright weapons: they beat down a barbican and win the bridge. Had not the garrison been good at the great gates, they had won that city by their own strength. Then our men draw back and arrange their ranks better for fear of the drawbridge dashed asunder: they hie to the main quarters where is the king with all his men-at-arms arrayed on steeds. There was each prince supplied with men and his place appointed, and great decorated pavilions of rich cloth were raised and they set siege to the town. Then each takes his place and watches to the enemy and suddenly when a chance is given sets up an engine of war. On Sunday the sun shone exceeding warm and the king called on Florente, who was flower of knights, and said, "The Frenchmen are become enfeebled methinks, they are uncertain folk to place in those fair marches for they need flesh and the food that they like. There are forests fair upon all sides and thither are our foemen fled with goodly beasts. Thou shalt go to the wild moorland and forage the mountains: Sir Forawnt and Sir Florydas shall follow thy bridle: we must refresh our people with some fresh meat for they are fed on the field with the fruit of the earth. On this journey shall go Sir Gawayne himself, the most honourable warden, if it please him well: Sir Wecharde and Sir Waltere, those honourable knights, with all the wisest men of the west marches: Sir Clegis and Sir Clarybalde and Sir Clarybownde the noble and the captain of Cardiff fairly arrayed; go now and warn all the watch, Gawayne, and the others and go forth on your way without further ado."

Now these fair men-at-arms go forth to the moorland through mountain glens and highland hills and copses and thick woods with hazel groves, through morass and moss and mountains so high, and on the misty morning they came to meadows mown and cut smooth and quite uncultivated and full of fair flowers. Here these bold men unbridle and let their horses feed at the break of day when the birds began to sing while the rising of the sun, which is messenger of Christ, comforts all sinful things that have sight on this earth. Then went forth the warden, Sir Gawayne himself, for he was a wise and doughty man, to seek adventures. Then he was aware of a man wondrously well armed walking by the edge of the water dressed in a coat of mail bright to behold and furnished with a broad shield and on a huge horse: no man had he but only a boy who rode by his side and

carried his spear: this knight bore on his shield jessant in gold three sable greyhounds with silver plates and chains, and in the chief a carbuncle flashing in the light; he was a

wrathful chief to any that might challenge him.

Sir Gawayne rides to the man with a glad will: he takes a great lance from his squire and rides even over the stream on his noble horse to battle with that bold knight where he stands in his strength, and fiercely in English he cries, "Arthur!" The other soon wrathfully answers him in the land of Loraine with a loud voice that all men might hear for the distance of a mile, "Whither ridest thou, brigand, that profferest so largely? Here thou wilt find no prey whatever thou mayest proffer! Unless thou come out of this encounter better than me thou shalt be my prisoner for all thy proud looks!" "Sir," quoth Sir Gawayne, "as God is my salvation, such prating knaves disturb me but little, but if thou makest ready thine arms it will ill befall thee ere thou goest out of this grove for all thy great words." Then they seize their lances these lordly men and ride at each other on their grey steeds. They thrust at each other with craft of arms until both the cruel spears burst at once: through shields they thrust and cut through mail, both cut through the mail for the distance of a span and thus are they both sorely wounded at once, but until they wreak their wrath they will never away. Then they draw in their reins and ride again; readily these bold men draw out their swords and strike on each other's helms full hard blows and hew at each other's hauberks with their hard weapons. Full stoutly they strike, these stern knights, and thrust at their stomachs with their steel points; they fight and flourish their flaming swords until bright sparks of fire spring from their helms.

Then Sir Gawayne was angered and sorely grieved; with Galuth his good sword he strikes fiercely and cleaves the knight's shield grimly asunder, so that who looks at the side, when his horse leaps, might see his liver. Then the man groans for the pain of his wound and thrusts at Sir Gawayne as he glides by and aslant smites him sore in his anger. An enamelled shoulder plate he hacks asunder and breaks the rerebrace with his fine sword. He cuts at the elbow with the clean edge against the vantbrace adorned with silver.

Through a double vestment of rich velvet, with the venomous sword he has cut a vein which bleeds so violently that all his wits leave him: the visor, the aventaile, and all his rich clothing with his valiant blood are besmeared. Then the tyrant draws in his reins and speaks fiercely and says, "Thou art wounded, thou must have a vein bandage ere thy bleeding stops: nor all the barbers in Britain shall staunch thy bleeding, for he that is wounded with this broad sword shall never cease to bleed." "Yea," quoth Sir Gawayne, "thou grievest me but little, thou seekest but to dismay me with thy fierce words, thou thinkest that with thy talking my heart falters: thou shalt meet with difficulty ere thou leavest this place an thou tellest me not what shall staunch this blood that runneth so fast." "This I tell thee truly and surely by my troth, no surgeon in Salerno shall heal thee of that wound unless thou sufferest me for the sake of thy Christ to make my confession at once and prepare me for my end." "This," quoth Sir Gawayne, "as God is my salvation, I give thee grace to do and grant it though thou hast served me grievously, if that thou wilt first tell me truly what thou seekest here thus singly and solitary all by thyself, and what faith thou confessest, concealing naught from me, and to whom thou owest allegiance and of what place thou art lord."

"My name is Sir Priamus: a prince is my father, renowned in his own parts among the proudest kings: in Rome where he reigns he is held to be noble: he hath been rebel to Rome and seized their lands and with them he has been warring wisely for winters and years, by wit and wisdom and by mighty strength: and at last by honourable war he has won his own. He is of Alexander's blood, the ruler of kings, and the uncle of his grandfather was Sir Hector of Troy: this then is the kindred of which I come and from Judas 1 and Josua, those gentle knights. I am his heir apparent and eldest above the others: of Alexandria and Africa and all those outer lands I am in possession and of full power in them. In all the rich cities that to the Porte belong I have truly the treasure and the lands and both tribute and tax while my time lasts. I was so haughty of heart while I stayed at home that I held none to be my hip's height under rich

<sup>1</sup> Judas Maccabeus.

heaven. Wherefore I was sent hither with seven score knights to help in this war with the assent of my father: and for my pride I am surprised with shame and in matter of arms overthrown for ever: now have I told thee the kindred of which I come, wilt thou for thy knighthood's sake tell me thy name?" "By Christ," quoth Sir Gawayne, "a knight was I never! But with the great conqueror a knave in his chamber: and have tended his wardrobe for winters and years: I put on his best armour that he liked best and raised all the tents that belonged to him: and I have arranged his doublets for dukes and earls and handsome jerkins for King Arthur himself, which he has used in war this eight winters. He made me yeoman at Yule and gave me great gifts and one hundred pounds and a horse and a rich harness: if I chance to my good fortune to serve that courteous man, I am speedily rewarded I promise thee forsooth."

"If his knaves be such, his knights must needs be noble: there is no king under Christ that may compete with him. He will be the heir to Alexander, who was praised by all the earth, and more skilful than ever was Sir Hector of Troy. Now by the chrism with which thou wert christened, whether thou be knight or knave, tell me thy name truly."

"My name is Sir Gawayne, I grant thee truly, a cousin to the conqueror as he knows himself, known in his calendar as a knight of his chamber and enrolled as the most famous of the Round Table. I am a knight and duke whom he dubbed with his own hands on one fair day before all his beloved knights: grieve not, good sir, that I have been thus fortunate: it is but the will of God, and the victory is his own."

Quoth Priamus, "By Peter! 'tis a better reward than I had been made prince of Provence and noble Paris! For I had rather be thus pierced to the heart by thee than that any squire had ever won such a prize. But here is harboured at hand in yon huge forests the doughty Duke of Loraine, with his faithful knights, the strongest of Dauphiné, and many Germans, and the lords of Lombardy that are held the leaders: the garrison of Godarde full gaily arrayed, the skilful men of the Westual, honourable men of Saxony, and many Saracens from Assyria: they are gathered full nigh and named in rolls, sixty thousand and ten strong men-at-

arms: but if thou leavest this heath we shall both come to grief, and if my wounds be not soon attended to I shall never be whole. Take heed of this henchman that he blow not his horn or thou wilt be speedily hewn to pieces: for they are my retinue to ride where I will and there are not readier men on this earth: if thou be caught by these folk thou wilt ride no further, neither wilt thou be ransomed for any riches on this earth."

Sir Gawayne went ere this peril came to him with this worthy man where he best thought and returned to the mountains where were our folk grazing their horses on the broad meadow: the lords leaning on their glittering shields and laughing aloud with delight at the singing of the birds. the larks and the linkwhits that sang merrily: and some were lulled to sleep with the music of the folk that lived in the green branches of the fair grove, for they sang such delicious notes. Then Sir Whycher was aware that their warden was wounded and went to him weeping and wringing his hands: Sir Wychere, Sir Walchere, those wise men-atarms, were amazed at Sir Gawayne and went to meet him and met him midway; and they marvelled that he had mastered that man so mighty in strength, but by all the wealth in the world their woe was very great, "For all our honour has gone out of this earth!"

"Grieve ye not," quoth Sir Gawayne, "for the love of God in Heaven: for this is but gossamer and laid on for the time being: though my shoulder be wounded and my shield bored through and to swing my arm aches me somewhat, this prisoner Sir Priamus, who hath perilous wounds, says that he hath salves that shall cure us both." Then a bold knight holds his stirrup and he alights and releases his bridle and lets his great steed graze on the meadow. He takes off his headpiece and his rich garments, then turns to his broad shield and lies on the earth: in the whole body of that bold knight there is no blood left. Then goodly knights hurry to Sir Priamus and carefully take him from his horse in their arms: his helm and his hauberk they take off after, and straightway by reason of his wounds his heart was sore. They lay him down on the grass and take off his garments, and he lies at full length as he pleased best: a leaf of fine gold they find at his girdle that is full of the water of the four

wells that flow out of Paradise when the flood rises that bring forth much fruit that shall feed us all: be it laid on his flesh whose sinues are wounded, that man shall be free from wounds with four hours. They uncover that body with clean hands: with clear water a knight cleanses their wounds. cooling them kindly and comforting their hearts: and when the wounds are clean they bind them again: then they send for wine bearers and bring them wine with bread and meat and rich foods: and when they had eaten anon they armed themselves. Then the bold men cry, "To arms!" and call together their knights with a clear trumpet note: they call them to a council and tell them the state of affairs: "Yonder is a company of keen men-at-arms, the sharpest in conflict that exist under Christ: in you oaken wood a host is arrayed of enterprising men from these outer lands as Sir Priamus tells us, so help him, St. Peter!"

"Go, men," quoth Sir Gawayne, "and examine your hearts, for who shall set forth to battle in yon grove with yon great lords: if we return without booty the king will be angered and say we are worthless fellows and afraid of a trifle. We are with Sir Florent as it befalleth to-day, who is flower of all France for he never fled: he was chosen and encharged in council by the king to be chieftain of this company with many noble chivalry: whether he fight or flee we shall follow after him: but for fear of yon folk I shall

never forsake him."

"Father," quoth Sir Florent, "full fair ye speak! But I am a mere boy, unproven in arms: if any folly befall, the fault shall be ours and we shall be unkindly banished from France. It hurts not your honour, my own wit is but simple: you are the warden I wis, do as you please. You are at the most no more than five hundred, and that is clearly too few to fight with them all, for hangers-on and henchmen shall help us but little: they will soon run away for all their great words. I counsel you that ye act according to wisdom and turn away as honourable knights."

"I grant it," quoth Sir Gawayne, "as God is my salvation, but here are valiant men that seek victory, the fiercest knights of the king's chamber, who can speak over their cups knightly words: to-day we shall prove who shall win

the prize."

Now the fierce vanguard ride unto the field and alight on foot and hasten after the prey as bold men-at-arms. Florent and Floridas with five score knights followed in the forest and went on their way riding at a fast trot and rushed after the folk; then followed thereafter full five hundred against our folk, all strong men on fresh steeds: one Sir Feraunt was before upon a fair steed, he was fostered in Famagosta, the fiend was his father: he flies at Sir Florent and eagerly cries, "Why fleest thou, false knight? May the devil have thy soul!"

Then Sir Florent was wrath, and couched his lance on Fawuell of Friesland; against Feraunt he rides, and drew in the reins of his noble steed and rides towards the host: full on the forehead he slashed him even and disfigured his whole face with his fell weapon: through the bright headguard he has touched the brain and broken the neck-bone and thus

stopped his breath.

Then his cousin shouted and cried full loud, "Thou hast killed cold dead the prince of all knights: he has been tested on the field in fifteen kingdoms: never did he find a man that might stand up against him. Thou shalt die for his death by my own fell weapon and all the doughty knights that are there, to their grief, in you vale."

"Fie," quoth Sir Floridas, "thou abusive wretch! thou thinkest to slay us, thou flat-mouthed varlet!" Then Floridas with a sword as he glides by slices off all the flesh of his side, so that all the filth of the man and nigh all his

guts fall to his horse's feet as he rides on.

Then rides forth a man to rescue that man, who was Raynalde of the Rodes, and a rebel to Christ, perverted by pagans that offend Christ, he presses in proudly through the host of men for he had won much booty and honour in Prussia: wherefore it is that he proffers so largely in their presence. But then a man, Sir Richard of the Round Table, on a royal steed rides against him: through his round red shield he rushes him through so that the quivering spear runs to his heart. Then the man turns about and falls to the earth; he roars full loudly but he rides no more.

Now all that are whole and unkilled of these five hundred men fall on Sir Florent and five score knights between a pool and a river on a flat plot of grass; there our folk take

their stand and fight against them, then loud aloft is cried "Loraine" when men with long spears struggle together: x and on our side when aught ailed them they cry "Arthur!"

Then Sir Florent and Sir Floridas couch their lances and rush against the whole body and attack the men: where they rush first they fell five men and ere they go forth they kill many others: plaited coats of mail they burst and polished shields, they beat and bear down the best men that stay to encounter them: all that were in command of that host ride away, so rudely did these proud knights lay about them.

When Sir Priamus the prince perceived the state of affairs he felt sorry in his heart that he might not proffer battle: he went to Sir Gawayne and spake these words unto him: "Thy noble men who seek booty for thee are all put down and are overcome by the Saracens, more than seven hundred of the sultan's knights out of far lands: wilt thou suffer me, sir, for thy Christ's sake to support them with a troop of the men?"

"I am not grieved thereat," quoth Sir Gawayne, "the honour is their own, they must have full great rewards from my lord, for the bold men of France are now put to the test, they have not fought their fill this fifteen winters: I will not stir with my troop half a steed's length unless they be beset

by more troops than now stand in that place."

Then Sir Gawayne became aware that afar at the edge of the wood were the men of Westphalia upon strong horses, madly galloping along the way with all the weapons, Iwis, that are used in war. The old Earl Antele rode in the van-guard and on either hand eight thousand knights: his archers and shieldsmen passed all numbers that ever a prince

led armed to the field.

Then the Duke of Loraine rode up afterward with twice that number of Germans who were doughty men: pagans of Prussia, and noble riders come coursing on with Sir Priamus' knights. Then said the Earl Antele to Algere his brother, "I am full wrath with Arthur's knights, thus fiercely alone to ride against a whole host, they will be abashed full soon and all undone thus foolishly on a field to fight with us all. If they be not driven off with great slaughter it will be a wonder methinks: would they but

take heed and press on their way, ride home to their prince and leave their prey, they might at least then keep their lives and lose but little, it would lighten my heart, as God is my salvation!" "Sir," quoth Sir Algere, "they are little used to be defeated by an enemy; it angers me the more to say it, the fairest shall be dead, that rides in our armyfew though they are, ere they leave the field." Then good Gawayne, gracious and noble, with glorious glee he gladdens his knights: "Be not dismayed, good men, for all these glittering shields. Though you varlets be gay on their great horses, Banerettes of Britain, lift up your hearts-be not abashed by yon boys nor their bright garments! We shall destroy their host for all their fierce threatening-they shall be as meek as a dame is in bed to her lord. If we fight to-day the field shall be ours. The fickle faith shall fail and falsehood be destroyed: you folk are on the frontier-unproven in arms they seem. They have faith, and do homage to the fiend himself. We shall be held victors in the encounter, and shall be vaunted by the voices of valiant men; praised by princes in the presence of lords and beloved by ladies in divers lands. None of our forefathers had ever such honour. V Unwyn nor Absalom nor any of these others.

"When we are most in distress—we shall call upon the name of Mary—who is our master's saint in whom he hath great trust: we shall call upon that mild Queen who strengthens us all: whose calls on that Maid—shall never miscarry."

When these words were said they were not far behind, but the length of a wood, and cry "Loraine." There was never such jousting in a battle on earth, in the valley of Josephat as the tales tell us when Julius and Joatall were adjudged to die, as was there when the noble men of the Round Table rushed upon the troop on their noble steeds. For so fiercely they rushed with their quivering spears that the rabble was routed and rushed to the groves and came to that court as cowards for ever.

"By Peter!" quoth Sir Gawayne, "this gladdens my heart! that you rabble are gone that made so great a number. I hope that these variets shall harm us but little, for they will hide them hastily in the edges of you wood. There are fewer on the field now than was first numbered by forty thousand i' faith, for all their fair armies." But one Jolyan

of Jene, a giant full huge, has set upon Sir Jerante, a justice of Wales; through a gyronny shield he bores him through and a fine coat of splint armour with fine mail, jointures and fittings he tears asunder. On a swift steed he charges on against him. Thus is the giant slain in the joust—that wandering Jew—and Jerante is joyful and is glad thereat.

Then the horse soldiers of Gennes ride up at once and are seen on the frontier full five thousand of them: a man hight Sir Frederic with full many others charges forward and cries aloud, to fight with our vanguard who are on the field: and then the noble knights of the Round Table ride forth full eagerly and go out against them, they join in battle with the main portion of the troops, but they were illmatched. Of so great a multitude it was a marvel to hear: soon after at the assembly the Saracens discover the sovereign of Saxony who was never saved: giants jousted with gentle knights and through coats of mail of Jena pierced them to the heart. They hew through helms haughty knights so that the hilted swords pass on to their hearts, then the renowned men of the Round Table charge and rush down renegade wretches: and thus they drive to death dukes and earls throughout the whole day with dreadful deeds.

Then Sir Priamus the Prince in the presence of lords hastens to his horse and deftly catches it: then away he rides to the royal men of the Round Table: and quickly his retinue ride after him for they had seen his arms on his fair shield. Out of the army they rode like sheep out of a fold and rushed forward to the conflict and stood by their lord. Then they sent to the duke and said to him these words: "We have been thy soldiers this six years and more; we forsake thee now for we must needs follow our lord: we follow our sovereign into many kings' lands. But now is wanting our wages for this four winters: thou art feeble and false and payest us with naught but fair words: our wages are due and thy war is ended, we may to our own honour go whither we like. I warn thee treat us truly and trifle no longer, or thou shalt lose of thy tale ten thousand men."

"Go to the devil!" said the duke, "and may he have your bones! The danger of you dogs I shall never dread.

We shall win this day by deeds of arms, my own and my duchy's and my dear knights'. Such soldiers as ye are I set at but little who suddenly in default forsake their lord."

The duke tarries no longer with his army, but a dromedary carries him on, with many a dreadful knight; he goes to Sir Gawayne with a full great number of men from Granada who are held to be dreadful in battle. These freshly horsed men ride to the front and fell forty at once of the vanguard. They had fought before with five hundred: it was no marvel. i' faith, that they waxed faint. Then Sir Gawayne was angered and seized his spear and rode down against those gallant knights: he meets the fellow of Metz and bores him through as man of this middle-region that had angered him most. But one Chastelayne, a child of the king's chamber who was guard to Sir Gawayne of the west marches, rides after Sir Cheldricke, a noble chieftain, and with a hunting spear pierces him through: this check befell him by the chance of arms: so they chase that child: he shall never escape! For one Swyan of Swecy with his sword's edgethe squire's neck bone breaks asunder. He faints and dies and lies on the ground—he dies full soon and fought no more.

Then Sir Gawayne weeps with his grey eyes: the youth was a good man beginning in arms: for that dear child his face so changed that the chilling water ran down his cheeks. "Woe is me," quoth Sir Gawayne, "that I had never seen

"Woe is me," quoth Sir Gawayne, "that I had never seen this: I shall wage for that wight as that I can wield, an I be not avenged on that man who has thus wounded him."

He turns him sadly and rides at the duke, but one Sir Dolphyn the dread comes forward against him and Sir Gawayne strikes out at him with a grim lance so that the grounded spear reaches his heart: eagerly he rides on and wounds another—a heathen knight Hardolfe fortunate in arms: skilfully through the stomach he pierces him so that the gliding spear slips from his hand. There are slain on that slope by the strength of his hand sixty skilful men-at-arms and thrown down in the vale. Though Sir Gawayne was woe, he waits thereby and perceives that man who wounded the child: with his sword swiftly he smites him through so that he fainted quickly and swoons on the earth. And then he goes to the crowd and dashes at them. Rich hauberks he rends and cuts through shields: he rides on violently

and holds his course throughout the rearguard. And there he draws in his rein, the noble knight, and rides back to the

body of the Round Table.

Then our chivalrous men change their horses: they chase and cut down noble chieftains, and smite them full heartily on helms and shields, they wound and hew down heathen knights: helmets they cleave right down to the shoulders: never was there such a noise of the captains of this earth. Kings' sons were made captive, courteous and noble, and knights of the country who were held noble: lords of Loraine and Lombardy were seized and led prisoner by our loyal knights: those who pursued that day—theirs was the better

fortune, such a check at a chase never befell them.

When Sir Florent by force of arms had won the field, he rides before his host with his five score knights—their prey and prisoners follow after them with archers and shieldsmen and bold men-at-arms. Then goodly Sir Gawayne guides his knights, by the shortest routes, as guides tell him, for fear lest a garrison full of great lords might seize his booty or work him some such vexation. Wherefore they stood at the edge with his whole army while his booty passed the path that he dreads: when they could see the city that the king besieged—truly on that same day it was won by assault—a herald hied before them—the best of the lords—he went straight to the camp from those high lands, and to the king's tent and told him truly and how it had befallen them:

"All thy foragers are safe and sound and all thy fierce knights: they have foraged and fought with a full great number and many of thy foemen were destroyed by them. Our honourable warden has come well out of it all, for to-day he hath won honour for ever; he hath slain the Dolphin and taken the duke prisoner: many a doughty knight is dead by the force of his arms. He has many rich prisoners, princes and earls of the royalest blood that reigns on this earth: all thy chivalrous men have escaped full fairly save that to a Childe Chasteleynne a mishap hath befallen."

"Valiant herald by Christ!" said the king, "thou hast healed my heart I promise thee forsooth! I give thee in

Hampton a full hundred pounds."

The king then assembles his knights to begin the assault, and with elephants they surround the city on all sides; his

shield bearers lead on and scale the walls and each part hath its guard with wise men-at-arms. Then boldly they go forward and bend their engines of war, they load them with missiles and test their casting power: monasteries and asylums they batter to the ground—churches and chapels -so fair and white. Stone steeples full tall lie prostrate in the street, and houses with chimneys and many principal inns: they load the engines again and smash down plaster walls: the plaint of the people is piteous to hear. Then the duchess herself followed by her maids, the Countess of Crasvn with her fair maidens, kneeled down on the battlements where the king was, mounted on a well-caparisoned steed: they knew him by his countenance and cried full loud:

"King crowned by natural descent, take heed to these words! We beseech you, sir, as our sovereign and lord, to save us to-day for the sake of your Christ! Send us some help and peace for thy people, ere the city be swiftly taken by assault!" He lifts his visor with a noble countenance and virtuous expression, this valiant man, and speaks to her mildly with words full meek:

"No harm shall come to you, madam, from any that are mine: I give you a charter of peace and to your chief maidens -the children and the chaste men, the chivalrous knights; thy duke is in danger, but have no fear: he shall be judged

by me, but have ye fear of naught else."

Then he sent on each side to certain lords—to give over the assault, for the city had yielded: with the earl's eldest son he sent him the keys and seized the city that night with assent of his lords. The duke is sent to Dover, and all his dear knights, to dwell there in dungeons and sorrow for the

days of his life.

Then fled at the far gate folk without number, for fear of Sir Florent and his fierce knights: they leave the city and run to the wood, with victuals and vessels and rich raiment. They raise up a banner above the broad gates. To see Sir Florent in truth he was full glad. The knight climbed to the top of a hill and beheld the walls and said, "I see by yon sign that the city is taken." Sir Arthur enters anon with his army arrayed even during undern; 1 he determines to stay

<sup>1</sup> Between nine and twelve in the morning.

there. To each company the king cried aloud that on pain of life and limb and loss of land no loyal liegeman that belonged to him should lie by any lady nor true maidens nor any wife of a citizen—rich or poor—nor offer injury to any

man that belonged to that city.

When King Arthur had completely conquered the town and taken over the castle of the rich city, all the captains and constables, fierce and skilful in arms, acknowledged him to be lord. He divided and dealt out the lands to divers lords and provided a dowry for the duchess and her dear children. Then he appointed wardens to take rule by their wisdom all the lands he had won in war through his wise knights. Thus in Loraine he tarries as a lord in his own and sets laws for the land as he thought fit. And on Lammese day he goes to Lucerne and stays there at his leisure with great delight. There his galleys were drawn up, a full great number, all glittering like glass under the green hills with covered pavilions for anointed kings and cloth of bright gold for knights and others. Their baggage is soon loaded and their horses stabled and they cross over the stream to the land on the other side. Now he moves his army with joy in his heart over mountains so high along those marvellous ways, he goes in by St. Gothard, the watch tower he takes and readily he puts to defeat the garrison with great slaughter. When he had passed the height—then the king tarries there with his whole army looking about him: and he looks down on Lombardy and speaks aloud, "In yon fair land I shall be lord I think." Then they go to Como with kings anointed-that was renowned throughout the coast above all the rest. Sir Florent and Sir Floridas then go on before with brave men from France-full five hundred of them: to the city—unseen they go by the shortest route and set an ambush as they thought best. Then come out of that city full early in the morning, artful scouts that ride about on their horses right up the hills to look for men in ambush: so that no harm may come to them. Poor folk and shepherds come out afterwards with pigs to graze at the fine gates. Boys outside the walls play merrily with a boar that runs across the moor. Then they break out of their ambush and win the bridge and ride into the town with their banners displayed: they pierce and stab through those that withstand them four streets ere they desist; they destroy for ever.

Now the conqueror is in Como and holds his court there within the noble castle with kings anointed: he satisfies the commons that are of the city and comforts the sorrowful with knightly words: he made a bold captain a knight of his own, and the whole country was soon in peace with him.

The sire of Milan heard say that the city was won and sent to Arthur certain lords with great sums of gold, and sixty horses with trappings, and besought him as sovereign to succour the people and said he would truly be subject for ever and do him service and homage for his many lands: for Pleasance and Pawnce and Pownte—tremble for Pisa and Pavia, he offers openly both purple and rich cloth of gold and precious stones, palfreys fit for any prince and steeds tested in battle: and he promises to pay for Milan every year a million pounds in gold and to come meekly to him at Martinmas with all his followers, and that without any further asking he and his heirs shall do homage to Arthur while his life lasts. The king by his council sends him a safe conduct, and he comes to Como and acknowledges him to be lord.

Into Tuscany he turns this having fallen out well and takes towns full quickly with towers full high; walls he breaks down and destroyed the people, he made full many fair widows and caused great distress, for they sighed and wept and wrung their hands, and he laid waste by war all parts through which he rode, their wealth and earnings he despoiled and brought grief upon them. Thus they hurry on and spread over a great distance and spare but little, they despoil mercilessly and spilt all the vines: they waste unsparingly what was long saved up. Then they speed them to Spoleto with many spears. From Spayne into Spruyslande the news of him and tales of his ravaging spread and all are sorely dismayed. Towards Viterbo this valiant man now turns his reins: prudently in that vale he victuals his men with Vernage and other wines and baked venison. Readily the vanguard turn their horses from there into the vale of Vertennon among the vines: there this sovereign sojourns with ease in his heart to see whether the senators send any words: he revels with rich wines and indulges in

luxury this king with his fair knights of the Round Table, with mirth and music and all manner of games: never was there a merrier man on this earth.

But on a Saturday at noon a week afterwards, the wisest cardinal that belonged to the court kneels before the conqueror and speaks these words, prays him for peace and makes great offers to him to have pity on the pope that was thus downcast. They besought him for security for the sake of our Lord, for but a week until they were all assembled, and then they should surely see him on the following Sunday in the city of Rome as sovereign and lord and crown him kindly with hands anointed with chrism, with his sceptre as sovereign and lord. As a surety for this they brought with them hostages-heirs full fair eight score children richly attired in robes of eastern silk: and there betake themselves to the king and his fair knights. When they had completed their treaty with trumpet blasts they go to a tent in which tables are raised: the king himself is seated there with certain lords under a silken canopy reconciled at table together, and the senators are seated there by themselves and served with rich rare meats. The king mighty of mirth with his gentle words encourages the Romans at his rich table, and comforts the cardinal so knightly: and our noble king, as the stories tell us, treats the Romans with reverence at his rich table. The skilful and cunning men when they thought best took their leave of the king and turned to go back again; they strove to reach the city that night by the shortest route and thus the hostages of Rome were left with Arthur.

Then the noble king spake these words: "Now we may revel and rest for Rome is our own: set our hostages at ease—the handsome children: and see that ye give them everything that is in my camp. The Emperor of Germany and all the east marches, we shall be the overlord of all that is on earth. Ere the Cross¹ days we shall take over these lands and on Christmas day be crowned: and I shall reign in all our royalty and hold my Round Table with the rents of Rome as I well please: thenafter shall I go across the great sea with good men-at-arms to revenge the Man that died on the Cross." Then this comely king, as the chroniclers tell us, goes blythely to bed with a light heart: he flings off

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rogation days preceding Ascension Day.

his clothes speedily and slackens his girdle, and for want of slumber falls asleep speedily. But by one after midnight his whole manner has changed, on that morning he met with full wondrous dreams. And when his dreadful dream has reached its end the king trembles with fear, as though he would die, and sends for his magicians and tells them his fears.

"Since I was born, i' faith, so frightened I was never! Wherefore investigate it thoroughly and tell me the meaning of my dream and I shall readily tell you the whole truth. Methought I was in a wood astray by myself so that I knew not which way I should go, for wolves and wild boars and wicked beasts walked in that desert to seek their prey. These lions full dreadful to behold licked their teeth after lapping up the blood of my faithful knights. Through that forest I fled where the flowers grew high to hide me for fear from those foul creatures. I came to a meadow enclosed by mountains the most beautiful that men might behold on this middle region.1 The space was round and grown over with clover and grasses: the vale was even round with silver vines with golden grapes, greater ones than which were never seen: edged with shrubs and all manner of trees-avenues of trees and shepherds thereunder. All fruit was produced that flourishes on earth fairly bedecking the branches of the trees in the enclosure: there was no dripping of dew to injure aught, with the heat of the day all the flowers were quite dry. Then came down into the vale from the clouds a duchess fairly clad in diapered garments, in a bodice of silk of a very rich hue all overlaid to the hems with embroidery and with lady-like lappets the length of a yard: and all delightfully adorned with golden ribbons, with gems and besaunts,2 and other bright stones her back and breast were bedecked all over, with a caul and crown she was fairly bedight, and anything so comely of colour was never known. She whirled a wheel about with her white hands and turned it over artfully whenever she chose. The wheel was of red gold with noble jewels in it covered with ornaments and many rubies, the spokes were bedecked all over with silver bars, and stretched out full fair for the space of a spearlength: thereon was a chair renat white silver bedecked

The earth.

Rough reces of like bezant-coins.

with carbuncles changing in hues: upon the outer circle there clung kings in a row with crowns of bright gold that burst asunder: six from that seat full suddenly fell each

man by himself and said these words:

"'That ever I reigned on that rocking wheel I rue for ever! There was never so rich a king that reigned on this earth! When I rode with my company I wrought nothing else but hunting and revelling and taxing the people, and thus I spent my days as long as I lasted and therefore I am grievously damned for ever.' The first was a little man who was laid beneath, his loins were all lean and repulsive to see, his hair grey and long the length of a yard, his flesh and his body lamed full sore: one eye of this man was brighter than silver, the other was more yellow than the yoke of an egg. 'I was lord,' quoth the man, 'of many lands and all men praised me who lived on this earth, and now I am left no covering to heal my body, but now I am lost for ever; believe ye the truth.'

"The second man in truth that follow after them was more trusty in my mind and more powerful in arms: oft he sighed softly and said these words: 'On you seat have I sat as sovereign and lord and ladies loved to fold me in their arms;

and now my lordships are lost and laid aside for ever!'

"The third man truly was fierce and broad of shoulders—a fierce man to threaten though thirty were gathered against him: his diadem was dropped down—all decked with stones and set with diamonds and adorned for the nonce. 'I was dreaded in my days,' he said, 'in many realms and now am

damned to be dead, the greater my grief therefore.'

"The fourth was a fair man and powerful at arms—the fairest of figure that ever was formed. 'I was strong in my faith,' he said, 'while I reigned on the earth—famous in far lands and the flower of all kings; now my face is faded and it hath foully befallen me, for I am fallen from afar and

am surely friendless.'

"The fifth was a fairer man than many of these others, a powerful man and fierce with foaming lips: he clung fast to the rim of the wheel and held with his arm, but yet he failed and fell full fifty feet: and he sprang and leapt and spread out his arms, and at the distance of a spear-length he spake these words: 'I was a knight in Assyria and set by

myself as sovereign and seigneur of many kings' lands: now from my security I am suddenly fallen and by reason of my

sin you seat hath caused me to repent.'

"The sixth had a psalter fairly bound with a surplice of silk sewn right beautifully—a harp and a handsling with hard flint stones: what harm he hath received he tells full soon. 'I was deemed in my days,' he said, 'one of the doughtiest in deeds of arms that dwelt on this earth: but I was marred on earth in my greatest strength by this maiden so mild that moves us all.'

"Two kings were climbing and scrambling so high, the top of the wheel they were anxious to reach: 'This carbuncle chair we claim,' said they, 'as two of the most principal men on earth.' These nobles were chalk white—their cheeks and all their body, but the chair above they never reached. The furthermost was beautiful with a large forehead, the fairest in feature that ever was formed, and he was dressed in robe of a noble blue with fleurs de lys of gold spread all over it: the other was clad in a coat of bright silver with a fair cross carved of fine gold; four crafty little crosses by the great cross are seen, and thereby I knew the

king who seemed anointed.

"Then I went to that fair lady and greeted her pleasantly, and she said, 'Welcome truly, thou art well met: thou shouldest honour my will-didst thou know all trulyabove all the valiant men on this earth: for all thy honour in war thou hast won by me, I have been friendly to thee, and unkind to all others: this thou hast found, i' faith, and full many of thy knights, for I felled down Sir Trolle with fierce knights: wherefore the fruits of France are freely thy own: thou shalt reach the chair, I choose thee myself before all the best chieftains of this earth.' She lifted me up lightly with her slender hands and set me softly in the seat and gave me the sceptre. Skilfully with a comb she combed my hair so that the crisping crook reached my crown: she set on my head a diadem that was bedecked full fair-enamelled with blue and the earth painted thereupon encircled with the salt sea on many sides in sign that I was indeed sovereign of the earth.

"Then she brought me a sword with a full bright hilt and bade me brandish the blade. 'The sword is thy own: many

a swain had spilt his life-blood with a blow from that sword, for while thou wieldest that weapon it shall never betray thee.' Then she goes to take rest and rests where she likes to the trees of the wood-fairer than ever. There was no orchard so fair among those of the princes of the earth nor adornment so proud save Paradise alone. She bade the boughs to bow down and bring to her hands the best of the fruit that they bore on the high branches. Then they did according to her behest all together at one time-the highest trees of each copse, I promise thee forsooth. She bade me spare not the fruit but eat as I chose. 'Eat of the finest, thou fair man, and reach out for the ripest and enjoy thyself: rest, thou royal king, for Rome is thy own, and I shall readily give thee rest at the earliest moment and hand thee rich wine in rinsed cups.' Then she went to the well by the edge of the wood that was full of wine and ran wonderfully: she caught up a cupful and covered it fairly: she bade me take a deep draught and drink to herself, and thus she led me for about the space of an hour with all affection and love that any man could wish for: but at mid-day then all her manner changed and she threatened me greatly with wondrous words. When I cried upon her she cast down her brows. 'King, thou speakest in vain, by Christ that made me! for thou shalt lose this game and thy life afterwards, thou hast lived enough in luxury and lordship.'

"About she whirled the wheel and whirled me under till all parts of my body were smashed to pieces, and by that chair my chin was chopped asunder, and I have shivered with fear since this happened. Then I awakened in truth after that dreadful dream, and now I await my fate, say what

thou wilt."

"Man," said the magician, "thy fortune is passed, for thou shalt find here thy foe, ask whom thou wilt. Thou art at the highest, I promise thee forsooth; attempt what thou wilt, thou shalt gain no more! thou hast shed much blood and destroyed many guiltless folk in thy pride in many kings' lands: repent thee of thy wrong doing and prepare thee for death. Thou hast had a vision, Sir King, take heed if thou wilt, for thou shalt fiercely fall within five winters. Found abbeys in France, the fruits are thy own, for Froill and for Ferawnt and for the fierce knights that thou hast boldly

left for dead in France. Take heed yet of the other kings and consider in thy heart, for they were renowned conquerors and crowned on earth. The eldest was Alexander whom all the earth praised: the next was Hector of Troy—that chivalrous man; the third Julius Caesar, who was held a giant, in each gentle journey adjudged by knights. The fourth was Sir Judas, a full noble jouster, the masterful Maccabeus, the mightiest in strength: the fifth was Josua—that bold man-at-arms whom in eastern Jerusalem occasioned much joy. The sixth was David the good—deemed among kings one of the doughtiest that ever was dubbed, for he slew with a sling by the skill of his hands Goliath the great giant the grimmest on earth: who afterwards composed all the great psalms that are set in the psalter with beautiful words.

"The two climbing kings, I know it in truth, shall be called Carolus the son of the King of France: he shall be cruel and keen and held a conqueror and shall gain by conquest full many kingdoms, he shall obtain the crown that Christ bore himself and the real lance that struck his heart when he was crucified on the cross, and all the keen nails, knightly he shall

conquer it for Christian men's hands.

"The other shall be Godfrey who shall revenge God on the Good Friday with gallant knights: he shall be Lord of Lorraine, with the permission of his father, and after in Jerusalem there shall be great joy, for he shall recover the cross by craft of arms and shall be crowned king anointed with chrism: to no duke in his day shall such good fortune befall, nor such evil endure when the truth shall be made known. For they bring thee to make up the number of the nine noblest men named on earth: this shall be read in romance by noble knights, accounted and made known to revelling kings, and deemed on doomsday for deeds of arms to be the doughtiest that ever dwelled on this earth: so many clerks and kings shall speak of your deeds and help account of your conquest in chronicles for ever. But the wolves in the wood and the wild beasts are some wicked men that attack your realms, who have entered thy kingdom during thy absence to annoy thy people-foreigners and enemies from unknown lands. Thou shalt have tidings, I trow, within ten days that some trouble has arisen since thou

departedst from home. I warn thee to repent and confess thy wicked deeds! Man, mend thy ways, ere mishap befall

thee, and meekly ask for mercy for thy soul's sake."

Then rises the noble king and put on his garments, a red jerkin-rose coloured-the fairest of flowers, a gorget and pawnce and a rich girdle: and over all he wears a hood of full rich scarlet and a pillion hat that was adorned full fair with stones from the east, right precious stones; his gloves were gaily gilt and embroidered at the hems with small ruby stones full gracious to see; his beddy greyhound, and his sword, and no man else, and he hurries over a broad meadow with heavy breathing in his heart: then he follows a path along the edge of the wood, becomes troubled in spirit at a high road, musing by himself. At the rising of the sun he sees coming towards him by the shortest route to Rome a man in a great cloak with wide garments, with a hat and high shoes homely and round. With flat farthings the man was adorned all over: many shreds and tatters hung at the edge of his skirt, with scrip and pilgrim's cloak and many scallops. both pike and palm, all that a pilgrim should have. The man straightway greets him and bade him good-morning; the king lordly himself in the language of Rome-Latin all corrupt-full fairly speaks to him.

"Whither goest thou, man, walking thus alone while these parts are at war?—I hold it full risky: here is an enemy with a host under you vines; an they see thee, forsooth, sorrow betideth thee; save thou hast a safe-conduct to the king's self, knaves will kill thee and take all thou hast: and if thou keepest the high way they will also seize thee, save thou

have speedy help from his noble knights."

Then spake Sir Cradock to the king's self, "I shall forgive him my death, as God is my salvation—any man under God that walks on this earth—let the keenest come that belongs to the king's army, I shall encounter him as a knight—as Christ will have my soul. For thou mayest not take me nor stop me thyself, though thou be richly arrayed in fine garments, I shall not stop or hesitate by reason of this war to go where I will—not for any man of this world who was made on earth. But I will pass on in pilgrimage to Rome to purchase the pardon of the pope himself: and of the pains of Purgatory to be fully absolved. Then shall I surely

seek my sovereign lord, Sir Arthur of England, that illustrious man, for he is in this empire, as noble men tell me—

warring to the east with awful knights."

"From whom comest thou, bold man," quoth the king then, "who knowest King Arthur and his knights also? Wert thou ever in his court while he was in his own country? Thou speakest so kindly, it comforts my heart: for well art thou come and wisely dost thou seek him, for thou art a

British knight as I know by thy broad speech."

"I ought to know the king, he is my noble lord, and I am called in his court a knight of his chamber: Sir Cradock was I called in his fair court, keeper of Carleon under the king himself. Now I am driven out of the kingdom, with sorrow in my heart, and that castle hath been taken by foul men." Then the noble king caught him in his arms, brushed off his helmet and kissed him full soon, and said, "Welcome, Sir Cradock, as Christ is my help: my dear cousin by birth, thou chillest my heart, how fares it in Britain with all my bold men? Are they destroying or destroyed or altogether killed? Tell thou me kindly all that hath befallen, I have no need to doubt thee, for I know thee to be true." "Sir, thy warden is wicked and wild in his deeds, for he hath wrought much sorrow since thou passed out of the country. He hath taken castles and crowned himself, and seized all the rents of the Round Table: he hath divided the realm and dealt it out as he liked, he hath dubbed the Danes dukes and earls, and spread them over all parts, and hath destroyed cities: Saracens and Saxons on all parts he hath assembled a court of strange men, sovereigns of Surgenale, and many soldiers of the Picts and Pagans and proved knights of Ireland and Orgaile, outlawed men: all those men are knights that lived in the mountains and have leading and lordship as they like best. And Sir Childrike is held a chieftain there; that same chivalrous man oppresses thy people: he robs thy monks and ravishes thy nuns and ever rides with his host to tax the poor people. From the Humber to Hawick he holds his own and all the county of Kent is his by treaty: the fair castles that belong to the crown, the woods and fair forests and the sea shores—all that Hengist and Horsa held in their time. At Southampton on the sea there are seven score ships, filled with fierce folk out of far lands, to

fight with thy men when thou assailest them. But yetanother word truly, as yet thou knowest not the worst: he hath wedded Gaynor and holds her his wife and dwells in the wild bounds of the west marches and hath wrought her with child as witnesses tell. Of all the men of this earth, he was most unworthy as a guardian to keep women! Thus hath Sir Modrede marred us all! Wherefore have I come over these mountains to tell thee the truth."

Then the valiant king for sorrow in his heart and for the cureless woe became pale. "By the rod," said the king, "I shall revenge it; he shall repent full swiftly for all his foul deeds." All weeping for woe he went to his tent: then sadly the wise king awakened his men, called together with the trumpet kings and others, calls them to council and told

them of what had befallen:

"I am betrayed by treason, for all my true deed, and all my work is overthrown; it chances no better. He shall misfortune meet who wrought this treason an I may surely take him—as I am a true lord. This is Modrede the man that I most trusted; he hath taken my castles and crowned himself with the rents and riches of the Round Table: he hath made all his retinue of renegade wretches and divided up my realm to various lords—to soldiers and Saracens from far lands. He hath wedded Gaynor and holdeth her to wife, and a child is conceived—so my misfortune will have it. They have gathered on the sea shore seven score ships full of fierce folk to fight with me. Wherefore to Great Britain ve must set out to destroy the man that hath caused us this evil. No bold men shall go save those on fresh horses and vell tested in battle, the flower of my knights: Sir Howell and Sir Hardolfe shall here remain to be lords of the men that belong to me here: to take charge of Lombardy that no man ise against me, and to take heed of Tuscany carefully as I bid them: to receive the rents of Rome when they are counted ut: to note the day when they were assigned to be brought, r else all the hostages without the walls shall be hung traightway all together on high."

Now the bold king sets out with his best knights, arrays is troops and packs his baggage and rides forth afterwards: e turns through Tuscany and tarries there but little, he lights not in all Lombardy save when the light fails. He

rides over mountains by marvellous paths and hastens through Germany by the shortest routes: comes even unto Flanders with his fierce knights. Within fifteen days his fleet is assembled, and then he sets out in his ships and lingers no longer. He cuts with a sharp wind over the bright water. By the rock with ropes he rides at anchor. There the false men floated and held their place on the flood: their ships with loading chains were held together and filled to the very top with chivalrous knights: and behind in the background could be seen the helms and crests of hatches filled with heathen men that were concealed thereunder: the boats were proudly adorned with painted cloths—each piece stitched to the other and covered with shaggy coverlets doubled over: and thus the dread Danes have covered all their ships so that no arrow might be able to reach them. Then the king and the men of the Round Table, noble in council, arrayed his ships: that day he dealt out dukedoms and dubbed knights, prepared long-boats and rafts and pulled up stones: the upper deck houses he stuffed with gear as he thought best and bent his crossbows violently thereafter: they carefully arranged all their necessary tackle, prepared for defence and drew up their men. Grim goads of steel and gyves of iron they distributed from man to man to all those stout men-at-arms. Many a fair lance was raised aloft: men were on the lee-board-lords and others-and armoured shield bearers on the port with painted shields. At the hindmost barrier stood helmed knights. Thus they move to the sea shore by reason of the shooting: each man in his dress, full bright were their garments. The bold king, all bareheaded with beaver-coloured locks, is in a barge and rows about to do his business: a man carries his sword and his inlaid helmet and a mantlet of silver mail, encircled with a crown adorned full richly: he goes to each boat to comfort his knights: to Clegis and Cleremownde he cried aloud:

"O Gawayne! O Galyran! these good men's bodies." To Loth and to Lionel full fairly he speaks and to Sir Lawncelot de Lake with lordly words: "Let us win back the kingdom—though the cost be our own, and make them flinch speedily—all yon bloodhounds, destroy them on board first, then burn them afterwards! Hew down heartily

von heathen dogs! They are half vagabonds, I'll wager youmy hand!" Then he reaches his boat and anchors once more. He takes up his fair helmet and his bright mail, spreads out his banners abroad, inlaid with gules and with crowns of gold fairly adorned. But the chief of his banners bore a chalk-white Maiden with a Child in her arms, who is Lord of Heaven: without change in choice these were the chief arms of Arthur the fair while he was on earth. the mariners call on the masters of ships: merrily each mate talks to his fellow: they talk of their business, how they had fared, and tie hurdles on trestles, and trim their sails, unfurl bonettes. 1 and batter down hatches: brandish brown steel. and blow their trumpets; they stand stiff on the stem of the vessels and sail on: they strike across the stream where the battle begins: for the stirring wind rises out of the west and blows fiercely into the men's sails, and thus dashes up against the ship heavy boats so that the beak and beam burst asunder; so stoutly the forestern hits the stem that the stays on the starboard are stricken to pieces; by that time boat upon boat, craft and other ships, cast grappling-irons across to seize the next boat. Then were the stays hewn down that hold up the masts: there was a furious collision and the cracking of ships could be heard: great battleships burst asunder, many a cabin was broken and cables destroyed; knights and keen men killed the enemy-fine castles were cleft asunder with their keen weapons—full fair castles that were beautifully coloured. Ladders thereafter they hack down edgeways and with the swing of their swords sweep down the masts: from the first blow knights and others fall overboard and many in the fore-part of the ship are thought to be dead. Then fiercely they fight with their heavy weapons and armoured knights rush fiercely on board; out of small boats the ships were pelted with stones and many of the best men were beaten down and the hatches burst. Some men are bored through with goads of iron and many boldly cast venomous weapons. Archers of England shoot. full eagerly and strike through the hard steel full heavy blows. Soon all the heathen knights begin to waver, wounded through the hard steel: they will never be healed. Then they fall to the fighting and thrust with spears. All

Additional pieces of canvas laced to the top of sails.

the boldest stand to the front who are in the fight, and each one boldly puts his strength to the test and fights in that fight with his dread weapons. Thus they dealt blows that day, these dubbed knights, till all the Danes were dead and thrown into the deep. Then the Britons strike out with their swords and spring in upon the lordly men. And when men from far lands leap into the water for fear all our lords laugh aloud at once. By that time spears were sprung and ships smashed and Spaniards speedily spring overboard: all the keen warriors, knights and others, are killed cold dead and cast overboard. Their squires have soon shed their lifeblood—and heathens lie on the hatches in their death throes. and sinking into the salt sea we see seven hundred at once. Then Sir Gawayne the Good hath won the victory and all the great boats he gives to his knights: as for Sir Gervn and Sir Griswolde and other great lords, this good man makes Galuth smite off their heads. This then was the fate of the false fleet upon the water and thus their foreign folk were left for dead. Yet still the traitor is on land with his tried knights and with sound of trumpet. They ride on caparisoned steeds and show themselves under cover on the banks of the shore: he does not hide himself for shame, but shows himself openly. Sir Arthur and Sir Gawayne set forth themselves against the sixty thousand men that stood in their sight. By the time all the folk in the ships were killed the tide had gone out, and then it was all slush with great pools of water and the low water hindered the king from landing. Wherefore he stays there for fear of losing his horses and to see to his liegemen and his faithful knights if any were lamed or lost, to see if they might be healed. Then Sir Gawayne the Good takes a galley and glides up a water channel with good men-atarms: when he grounds with very wrath he springs into the water so that he sinks to his waist in all his golden garments: but he springs up upon the sand in the sight of the lords, alone with his troop, it grieveth me the more. With his banners and the best badges of his arms he rushes up the bank in his bright arms: he bids his standard bearer, "Go thou straightway to you broad battalion that stands on you bank: I assure you truly that I shall follow hereafter. See that thou flinchest for no sword nor any bright weapon, but bear down the best of them and bring them unto death:

be naught abashed by their boasts, but stand thy ground: " thou hast borne my banners in many a great battle: we shall fell von false knaves-the devil have their souls! Fight fast with the folk and the field shall be ours. An I may overtake that traitor, evil chance awaits him, who has thus worked this treason to my true lord; such a deed, little is followed by little fortune and that shall be judged on this very day." Now they hasten over the sand by the shortest route to that army, they rush on the soldiers and strike them great blows: through the shields so bright they strike the men so that the shafts of their lances snap off short: dread blows they dealt with piercing spears: on the grass damp with dew full many lie dead, dukes and dubbed knights the doughtiest of Denmark are undone for ever. Thus the men in despair tear their mail and reach out at the noblest of our men feeble blows: there our men throng in the thickest of the fight and thrust to the earth of their boldest men three hundred at once. But Sir Gawayne could not withstand, he grips a spear and runs against a man who bore gules full gay and gouts 1 of silver: he thrusts at his throat with his grim lance so that the grounden blade snapped in twain: with his heavy sword he smites him to death. The King of Gutland it was, a good man-at-arms. Thereafter the vanguard all take flight-all vanguished truly by our valiant men: then they come up to the main army which is led by Modrede. Our men go forwards—to their ill-hap—for had Sir Gawayne had grace to hold the green hill, he had won honour I wis for ever.

But then Sir Gawayne prepares him well to wreak his vengeance on this warlock that caused this war: and rides to Sir Modrede among all his men with the Montagues and other great lords. Then Sir Gawayne was wrath and with a great will he couches a lance and loudly calls out, "Falsebred man, the fiend have thy bones. Fie on thee, felon, and thy false works, thou shalt be dead and undone for thy false

deeds, or I shall die this day if destiny decree."

Then his enemy with a host of outlawed barons surround our excellent knights: this the traitor in his treason had tried himself. Dukes of Denmark he sent full soon and leaders of Lettowe with legions of men to surround our men

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Heraldry, coloured drop-shaped figures.

with lances full keen, soldiers and Saracens out of far lands. sixty thousand men full well arrayed: safely they gather round our seven score knights, suddenly by deceit on the salt sea shore. Then Sir Gawayne wept with his grey eyes in sorrow for his good men that he soon would lose: for he knew they were wounded and overcome, and what with sorrow and woe all his wits forsook him. And then sighing he said with falling tears, "We are beset by the Saracens upon all sides! I sigh not for myself as God is my salvation; but to see us surprised my sorrow is the more. Be brave to-day, you dukes shall be yours! For the sake of the dear Lord, dread no weapon this day! We shall end this day. all as excellent knights; heirs to endless joy with spotless angels. Though we have unwittingly given ourselves away, we shall all fight hard for the honour of Christ. For you Saracens, I pledge ye my troth, we shall sup with our Saviour with great splendour in heaven in the presence of that precious man, the prince of all others, with prophets and patriarchs, and full noble apostles before His holy face who made us all. Whosoever yields himself to you fiends while he is alive and with hands unharmed, he shall never more be saved or succoured by Christ, but Satan shall sink his soul into hell!"

Then grimly Sir Gawayne grips his weapon, against that great array he goes forth full soon: madly he tears the chains of his noble sword and he thrusts out his shield, and tarries no longer. But fiercely and mad-like he rushes by the nearest way. Many of their warriors he wounds with wrathful blows: and wherever he passes runs with blood: but though he is sorely grieved he hesitates not at all, but wreaks, to his honour, the vengeance of his lord. He pierces steeds with conflict and fierce knights so that bold men in their stirrups sit stone dead: he cleaves the rank steel and tears up the mail: no man might stop him, his reason had left him. He falls in a frenzy in his fierceness of heart: he fights and fells all that stand against him. Never a man doomed to die had such fortune on earth. Against the whole army headlong he rushes and wounds the hardiest men that live on earth: he rushes like a lion and lances them through, lords and leaders that stand in that array. Yet Sir Gawayne, for all his sorrow, hesitates not at all, but

wounds their warriors with wonderful blows, as one who would wilfully throw away his life: and for sorrow and fierceness all his wits left him: then mad, like a wild beast, he rushed to them straight: wherever he passed was running

with blood: so did one man fight to avenge another.

Then he moves toward Sir Modrede among all his knights and caught him in mid-shield and bursts it through, but the man started back to avoid the weapon and cuts him in the short ribs a gash about the length of a span: the shaft shuddered and snapped in the brave man so that the fastrunning blood pours over his thighs and could be seen on his greaves that were polished brightly. And so they shift and shove and he falls to the earth with the impulse of the lance: he falls on his shoulders full length along the ground and grievously wounded. Then Gawayne strikes at the man and falls to the earth: all his anger is roused but his fortune is no better: he draws out a short knife sheathed with silver and would have gashed him with it but the gash failed: his hand slipped and slid aslant across the mail and the other deftly throws him down. With a fierce knife the traitor strikes him through the helm and the head so that it strikes the brain. And thus Sir Gawayne is gone-that good man-at-arms unrescued by his men—the more is thepity! Thus Sir Gawayne is gone; all the great lords of Glamour and Wales those gallant knights shall never be glad again for grief at this awkward stroke!

King Frederic of Fres straightway asks the false man of our fierce knight: "Knewest thou ever this knight in thy fair kingdom? Of what kin came he, make it known full truly what man was this with the gay arms with this golden griffon who is now fallen face down? He hath greatly grieved us as God is my salvation: for he bore down our good men and angered us sore. He was the boldest in battle that ever wore steel, for he hath astonished our army and

destroyed it for ever."

Then Sir Modrede opened his mouth and spake full fairly, "He was matchless on this earth, by my troth: this was Sir Gawayne the Good—the gladdest of all, and the most gracious man that lived under God—a man hardiest of hand, most fortunate in arms, and most courteous in hall under rich Heaven: the lordliest of bearing while he was

alive, for he was a lion renowned in many far countries: hadst thou known him, Sir King, in the country where he lived, his skill, his knighthood, and his kindly deeds, his power and his doughtiness and his deeds of arms, thou wouldst have sorrowed for his death all the days of thy life."

Then that traitor at once lets the tears fall and turns away speedily and talks no more, but goes weeping away and cursed the hour when his fates first caused him to work such woe: when he thought of this thing it pierced his heart. For the sake of his cousin's blood he rides sighing away: and when that renegade man remembered the reverence and joy of the Round Table, he was sorry and repented of all his evil works and rode away with his company and would tarry no longer for fear of the great king lest he might come up. Then goes he to Cornwall sorrowful in heart by reason of his kinsman that lies on the coast: he tarries there trembling to hear of new tidings. There these traitors tarry until the next Tuesday; then he goes with a train treason to work, and by the side of the Tamar for the time he rears his tents: in the meanwhile he sends a messenger and writes unto Gaynor how things have changed and how the fair king has arrived on the coast: how he has fought with the fleet and killed them all: and he bids her depart to a distant place and to flee with her children, while he would draw him off to give her time to go over to Ireland into the distant mountains and live there in the wilderness within the waste lands.

Then she yearns and sobs at York in her chamber and groans full piteously with falling tears, she goes out of the palace with all her fair maidens towards Chester in a chariot, they show her the way: she is ready to die for grief in her heart. She goes to Caerleon and takes up the veil and begs there the holy garments for the honour of Christ, and all this for falsehood and fraud and fear of her lord.

But when our wise king knew that Gawayne had landed, he writhes for woe and wringing his hands he straightway launches his boats upon the low water, fierce as a lion with his bold knights, slips into the shallow water aslant up to his girdle, then scrambles up swiftly with his sword drawn, gathers his army with banners displayed and hurries over

the broad sand with sorrow in his heart. He walks boldly to the field where the dead lay: of the traitor folk on caparisoned horses ten thousand were dead to tell ye the truth and certainty; on our side seven score knights together with their leader are found dead.

The fair king hurries over knights and others, earls of Africa and Austrian barons, earls of Orgaile and Orkney, and the Irish kings, the noblest of Norway in full huge numbers, dukes of Denmark and dubbed knights: and the Gothic king in his gay arms lies groaning on the ground bored through the middle. The good king seeks with sorrow in his heart and hunts among all the knights of the Round Table: finds them all in a troop with the dead Saracens encircled around them: and Sir Gawayne the Good in his gay arms gripping the grass with his hand, his face to the earth, his banners inlaid with gules beaten down, his sword and his broad shield all bloody: never was our king so sorrowful in heart, nor so sad as he was at that sight.

Then looks the good king and was unhappy in heart, he groans full piteously with flowing tears. He kneels down by the body and takes it in his arms, he lifts up the umberer and kisses him straightway, looks at his eyelids that are fast locked, his lips are like lead and his face very pale. Then

the crowned king cries out full loud-

"Dear cousin by kin, I am left in sorrow, for now my honour is gone and my war ended. Here is the hope of my welfare, my good-fortune in arms; my heart and my boldness were all in him, my counsel, my comfort that delighted my heart! The king of all knights that lived under Christ, thou wert worthy to be king though I bore the crown: my welfare and my honour in all this fair world was won through

Sir Gawayne, through his wisdom alone!

"Alas!" said Sir Arthur, "now is my sorrow the greater! I am utterly undone in my own lands. Ah! Dread and terrible death, thou tarriest too long! Why comest thou from afar off? thou drownest my heart!" Then the faint king swoons and falls into a swoon, but rises up swiftly and sweetly kisses him till his great beard was bloody all over, as if he had been cutting up beast that he had killed when hunting. And had not Sir Ewayne come with other great lords his bold heart had burst with sorrow at that hour.

"Cease," said these bold men, "thou wilt distract thyself, this is bootless woe for it can avail nothing. It is no honour, I wis, to wring thy hands: to weep like a woman is not held as wise. Be knightly of countenance as a king should and give over such clamour for the love of Christ in Heaven."

"For blood," said the bold king, "I shall never cease ever my brain burst or my breast: never had I such sorrow that sank to my heart. He was close of kin to me, my sorrow is the greater thereat: never was there so sorrowful a sight seen with my own eyes: he is guiltless and was surprised for my own sake!" Down kneels the king and cries full loud—

"O Righteous God—this sorrow behold! look upon this noble red blood that runs on the earth: it were worthy to be enclosed in gold, for it is guiltless of sin as God is my salvation!" Down kneels the king with sorrow in his heart and takes it up kindly with his clean hands and puts it in a helmet and covers it carefully and takes it with the

corse to the place where he is encamped.

"Here I take my oath," quoth the king then, "to Messie and to Marie, the gentle Queen of Heaven, that I shall never hunt nor uncouple hounds at roe or reindeer that run upon the earth; nor let loose greyhound nor let fly gosshawk nor see a fowl of the air killed, that flies with wings: nor let sit on my hand falcon either male or female, nor yet with gerfalcon hunt on this earth: nor reign in my royalty nor hold my Round Table, till thy death, my dear cousin, be duly revenged: but I shall ever stand still as one paralysed while my life lasts till God and dread death have worked their will."

Then they took up the dead body with sorrow in their hearts and carried it on a courser with the king himself; the road to Winchester they follow by the shortest routes wearily and sorrowfully with many a wounded knight. Then comes the prior of the place and the holy monks pacing in procession to meet the king: and he gave them the body of the noble knight.

"See that it be cleanly kept," he said, "and guarded in the church, and mourned for with dirges as is due to the dead, and honoured with masses for the sake of his soul: see that it want no wax nor any other thing required for its honour.

If thou keepest thy convent, thou wilt receive any honour thou wishest at my coming again if Christ will allow. Wait for the burial till those that wrought us this woe and carried

this war be brought down to death."

Then said Sir Wychere the Wise—a wise man-at-arms: "I warn ye set forth carefully and take great precautions; stay in this city and assemble thy men, and abide with thy bold men in this rich town: get thy knights out of the county who hold the castles and out of the garrisons good men-at-arms, for we are truly too few to fight with them all that we saw in his following on the banks of the sea." With a fierce countenance then the king spake these words—

"I pray thee, care naught, Sir Knight, nor cast thou dreads: had I no man but myself alone under the sun and I saw him within reach or set hands on him, I should among all his men maul him to death ere I stirred half a steed's length from his horse. I should strike him in the midst of all his army and destroy him for ever: and thereto I take my oath devoutly to Christ and to his mother Mary the gentle Queen of Heaven. I shall never stay at ease or at peace in my heart in city nor in suburb upon this earth, nor vet sleep or slumber with my worn-out eyes, till he be slain that slew him if any such craft succeeded: but I shall ever pursue the pagans that destroyed my people while I may hurt and imprison them wherever I will." No man of all the Round Table was there who durst stop him, nor divert that prince with pleasant words, nor did any of his liegemen dare look him in the eyes, so fiercely he looked for the loss of his knights. Then he comes to Dorset, but tarries there no longer fearly but sorrowful, with many tears! he goes into Cornwall with grief in his heart: the tracks of the traitor he follows along and turns in by the Trent the traitor to seek: he finds him in a forest on the following Friday: the king lights on foot and fiercely calls out and with his noble men he takes the field.

Now the enemy come out from under the edge of the wood with hosts of foreigners dreadful to behold. Sir Mordrede the Malebranche with all his following comes out of the forest from all sides, in seven great battalions nobly arrayed sixty thousand men: the sight was full huge, all the fighting folk of the far lands drawn up fairly in array by the margin

of the fresh stream. Now all Arthur's host was reckoned with knights about eighteen hundred in all, entered upon rolls: that was an unfair match, but the might of Christ to

fight with that multitude is given to these men.

Then the noble king of the Round Table rides on a rich steed, and arrays his men, he sets out his vanguard as he thinks best: Sir Ewayne and Sir Errate and other great lords take charge of the main body skilfully thereafter with Merrate and Meredu the mighty in strength. Idrous and Alymere those noble young knights go forward with Arthur with seven score knights: he draws up the rearguard readily thereafter the strongest men of the Round Table, and thus he sets his men in order: then he loudly calls out to them and

comforts his men with knightly words-

"I beseech ye, sirs, for the sake of our Lord, that ye do well to-day and dread no weapon. Fight fiercely now and defend yourselves: fell down yon folk dead and the field shall be ours: they are Saracens yon folk, may they be all slain! Set on them fiercely for the sake of our Lord: if we are destined to die to-day in this earth, we shall be carried to Heaven ere our bodies be cold. See that ve be wanting in nothing but that ye fight nobly: lay you men low by the edge of the water. Take no note of men nor reck ye of any rumour ye may hear: be busy round my banners with your bright weapons so that they be readily guarded by bold knights and held nobly aloft for all to see: if any man cast them down, rescue ye them soon. Work this now for my honour for to-day the war ends, ye wot my weal and my woe, do as ye please. May good Christ comfort ye with a crown for the kindliest creatures that ever a king led! I give ye all my blessing with a good will and all bold Britons be happy to-day!"

They set out in good time and approach the enemy: noble and valiant men prove their strength: loudly the trumpeters blow their trumpets and their fair cornets when the knights assemble and then joyfully these gentle knights join company. A bolder tourney was never held when bold Britons took up their shields and Christ crossed them, and they couched

their lances.

Then Sir Arthur's host espies the enemy and they thrust out their shields and tarry no longer: they rush to the

squadrons and shout aloud, through shining shields they pierce the men. Readily those bold men of the Round Table with the strong hard steel tear their mails: they burst plaited coats of mail and burnished helms, they hew heathen men down and cleave necks asunder. Fighting with fine steel, the dving blood runs off the boldest knights unconquered till then. The giants of Orgayle and Irish kings attack our vanguard with poisonous arrows: Picts and Pagans with dangerous weapons and spears pitilessly destroy our knights and hew down the boldest of them with heavy strokes. Through the whole band they hold their way. Thus they fight fiercely on all sides so that much blood of the bold. Britons is spilled and no one dare rescue them for all the riches of the world. Their leader was so beset and surrounded by others he durst not stir a step, but stood there himself till three divisions of the army were destroyed by his own hand.

"Idrous," quoth Arthur, "it behoves thee to go! I see Sir Ewayne beset with keen Saracens: ride thou to rescue him, get thyself ready at once! Hie thee with bold men to the help of thy father! Set in on the side and succour you lords, save they be helped and saved I shall never be at rest!" Idrous answers him earnestly then: "He is my father 'tis true, and I shall never disobey him, for he fostered and fed me and my fair brethren, save if I leave this place, as God is my salvation, or recollect any kinship save thy own. I never disobeyed him for any man alive, but ever cheerfully, as best I could, I worked his will. He ordered me kindly with knightly words that I should faithfully attend on thee and on no other man: I shall his commandment do, if Christ will allow me. He is older than I and we shall both die, he shall go first and I shall come after: if he be destined to die to-day on this earth, may good Christ with a crown take care of his soul!"

Then groans the noble king with sorrow in his heart, lifts his hands on high and looks unto Heaven, "Would that God had determined by his good will that I should die this day for you all! That I had liefer do than be lord all my life of all that Alexander possessed while he was on earth." Sir Ewayne and Sir Errate, those excellent knights, ride together against the enemy and strike out eagerly: the

giants of the Orkneys and the Irish kings cut up our greatest men with their ground swords, they hack through the bodies with their hard weapons and lay low our men with their hard blows. Shoulders and shields they cut through to the bottom: and right through coats of mail they cut asunder. Such honour never had any kings at their death save Arthur alone. So the heat of the day dried up their hearts and they both die athirst-the greater the pity: now our main body comes up and mingles in the fight. Sir Mordrede the Malebranche with all his folk now comes on the field the more to our danger, for he had hid himself behind within the edge of the wood. He had seen the encounter right through to the end how our chivalrous men had fared in the chance of arms. he knew that our folk were overcome and left for dead, to encounter the king he soon found his way. But the craven wretch had changed his arms: he had truly abandoned the saltier engrailed and taken up three lions all of bright silver passant on purple with rich precious stones so that the king should not recognise the cowardly cur: by reason of his cowardice he cast off his attire: but the goodly king knew him full soon and speaks to Sir Cador these kindly words-

"I see the traitor coming yonder full eagerly: yon fellow with the lions is like to himself. Evil shall betide him if I may reach him for all his treason and treachery as I am a true lord! To-day Clarente and Caliburne shall meet to-gether to test which is keener in cutting or harder of edge: we shall test fine steel upon fine armour. That Clarente was my daintiest darling sword and held full dear, kept for the coronations of anointed kings: on days when I dubbed dukes and earls, it was boldly carried by its bright hilt: I never durst soil it in deeds of arms, but ever kept it clean for my own use. But I see Clarente unsheathed—the crown of all swords-my wardrobe at Wallingford, I wot, is destroyed: for no man knew of it save Gaynor herself, and she had the keeping of that noble weapon and of the closed coffers with the crown jewels, the rings and the relics and the regalia of France which was found on Sir Froll when he lay dead." Then Sir Marrate in anger meets Sir Mordrede with an armoured mace, he strikes at him mightily: the border of his headpiece he burst asunder so that the bright red blood runs over his coat of mail. The man flinches at the blow and turns pale, but yet he waits like a bear and grimly strikes at him. He draws out a sword that is brighter than silver: it was Sir Arthur's own and Uter his father's; in the wardrobe at Wallingford it used to be kept: therewith the vile dog reaches him such a blow that the other withdrew afar off and durst do nought else; for Sir Marrate was a man marred by age and Sir Mordrede was mighty and in his greatest strength: no man, in knight or other, might come within the reach of that sword but would lose his life-blood. Our prince perceives this and strikes his way through the crowd by force of his arm, meets with Sir Mordrede and

cries out fiercely-

"Turn, false traitor: thou deservest no better: by great God thou shalt die by the force of my hands! No man nor riches of this world shall rescue thee." The king strikes him knightly with Caliburn, the corner of the bright shield he cuts asunder and into the man's shoulder the width of a span so that the bright red blood could be seen on the mail. He shudders and shrinks but retreats but little and rushes forward quickly in his bright garments: then the felon with his fine sword strikes out sharply and cuts asunder the loins on the far side through the tunic and splint armour of the fair coat of mail: he pierces through Arthur's flesh half a foot long: that dread blow was his death, the greater the pity that ever such a doughty man should die save at God's will. Yet with Caliburn his sword full knightly he strikes, thrusts forward his bright shield and covers himself: then he sweeps off the sword hand of Mordrede as he glances by, an inch from the elbow, he hacks it asunder so that he swoons on the grass and falls in a faint. Through the arm covering and bright mail he was so cut that the sword hilt and the hand lie on the grass. Then speedily our man pulls off his front armour and thrusts him through with his sword to its bright hilt so that he sprawls on the ground and sinks down to die.

"In truth," said the dying king, "it seemeth wrong to me that such a false thief should have so fair an end." When they had finished this fight, then was the field won and the false folk are left for death upon the grass: to the forest some of them fled and hid in the groves and our fierce fighting folk follow after them: they hunt and hew down these heathen dogs and slay in the mountains Sir Mordrede's

knights: there escaped no Childe nor chieftain nor other, but they are all chopped down in the chace without pity.

But when Sir Arthur anon finds Sir Ewayne and noble Sir Errate and other great lords, he takes up Sir Cador with sorrow in his heart, Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremonde those fair menat-arms, Sir Lothe and Sir Lyonell, Sir Lancelot and Lowes, Marrake and Meneduke that were ever mighty; with sorrow he lays them together on the ground and looks at their bodies, and with a loud voice as one that wished to die and has lost his joy, then is distracted as one mad and all his strength fails: he looks up aloft and all his face turns pale: down he falls full soon and sinks in a swoon, but he rises on his knees and cries full often—

"Fair king with thy crown, I am left in sorrow: for all my lords in the land have been slain! They who did me honour by grace of God and upheld my manhood by the might of their arms, made me great in the world and master in earth: in a direful time the mishap took place, that I, for a traitor, have lost all my true lords. Here rests the rich blood of the Round Table, overthrown by a rebel, the greater the pity! I may now helpless rest on this heath like a woeful widow that hath lost her lord. I may sorrow and weep and wring my hands for my wisdom and honour is past for ever. Of all lords now I take leave till my death: here is the blood of Britons losely killed, and now on this day my joy is ended for ever."

Then gather together all the men of the Round Table, to that noble king they all ride: then assemble together full seven score knights in the sight of their sovereign that was left wounded. Then kneels the crowned king and cries aloud—

"I thank thee, God, for thy grace, with a good will that thou gavest us strength and wisdom to conquer those men and hast granted us the victory over those great lords! He never sent us shame nor any ignominy on this earth, but ever gave us the upper hand over all other kings: we have no time now to follow up these lords for yon bold man hath wounded me full sore. Let us go to Glastonbury; nothing else will be of use to us. There we may rest in peace and see to our wounds. For this good day's work may God be praised for he hath thus destined and decreed that we should die among our own men." Then they carry out his com-

mands at once and go to Glastonbury by the shortest road: they reach the Isle of Aveloyne and Arthur alights there: he goes to a manor for he could go no further. A surgeon of Salerno examines his wounds and the king sees by the examination that he can never be whole again, and soon to his faithful men he says these words—"Do ye call me a confessor with Christ in his hands: I shall receive the sacrament in haste whatever betides: Constantine my cousin shall bear the crown as it falls to him by kinship if Christ will allow him. Man, for my blessing, bury those knights that in battle were killed with swords: and thereafter go straight to Mordrede's children and see that they be slain privily and cast into the water: let no wicked weed wax nor flourish on this earth: I warn thee for thy honour do as I bid thee! I forgive all wrongs for the love of Christ in Heaven; if Gaynor hath wrought well, mayit well betide her!" He said In Manus boldly on the place where he lay and thus passed away his spirit and he spake no more. The baronage of Britain then, bishops and others go to Glastonbury with sorrowful hearts to bury their bold king and put him in the earth with all the honour and profusion that was due to him. Fiercely rang the bells and tolled his Requiem, they sang masses and matins with mournful notes: holy men dressed in their rich robes, pontificates and prelates in their precious garments, dukes and knights in their mourning clothes, countesses kneeling and clasping their hands, ladies languishing and downcast to see: all were arrayed in black, women and others that were seen at the burial with flowing tears: never was so pitiful a scene in their time! Thus died King Arthur, as authors allege, who was of Hector's blood the king's son of Troy and of Sir Priamus the Prince praised on earth; from thence all his bold ancestors brought the Britons into Great Britain as the Brut tells us.

bere lies Arthur a king that was and will be.

There endes "Morte Arthure" writen by Robert of Thornton.

R. Thornton aforesaid who wrote this, may he be blessed of God. Amen!



## LE MORTE ARTHUR

LORDINGIS, that ar leff and dere, lystenyth, and I shalle you telle, By olde dayes what aunturs were Amonge oure eldris that by-felle: In Arthur dayes, that noble kinge, By-felle aunturs ferly fele; And I shalle telle of there endinge That mykelle wiste of wo and wele.

The knightis of the table Rounde,
The sangrayle whan they had sought,
Aunturs that they by-fore them founde,
Fynisshid, and to ende brought;
Their enemyes they bette and bounde,
For golde on lyff they lefte them noght;
Foure yere they lyved sounde
Whan they had these werkis wroght:

Tille on a tyme that it by-felle, The kinge in bede lay by the quene, Off aunturs they by-ganne to telle, Many that in that lande hade bene: "Sir, yif that it were youre wille, Of a wondir thinge I wold you mene, How your courte by-gynnyth to spille Off duoghty knightis alle by-dene.

Syr, your honour by-gynnys to falle, That wount was wide in world to sprede, Off launcelott, and of other alle, That euyr so doughty were in dede." "Dame, there-to thy counselle I calle, What were best for suche a nede?" "yiff ye your honoure holde shalle, A turnement were best to bede;

## Le Morte Arthur

For why, that auntre shalle by-gynne And by spoke of on euery syde, That knightis shalle there worship wynne Io dede of armys for to ryde; Sir, lettis thus youre courte no blynne But lyve in honoure and in pride." "Certys, dame," the kinge said thenne, "Thys ne shalle no lenger abyde."

A turnement the kinge lett bede, At Wynchester shuld it be, Yonge Galehode was good in nede, The chefteyne of the crye was he, With knightis that were stiff on stede, That ladyes and maydens might se Who that beste were of dede Thrughe doughtynesse to have the gre.

Knightis arme them by-dene
To the turnemente to ride,
With sheldis brode and helmys shene
To wynne grete honoure and pride.
launcelot lefte withe the quene,
And seke he lay that ylke tyde;
for loue that was theym by-twene
he made inchessoun for to abyde.

The kynge satte vppon his stede,
And forthe is went vppon his way,
Sir Agraveyne for suche a nede
At home by-lefte, for soth to say,
For men told in many a thede
That launcelot by the quene lay,
For to take them wyth the dede
He awaytes both nyght and day.

launcelott forthe wendys he Unto the chambyr to the quene, And sette hym downe vpon his kne And salues there that lady shene; "launcelott, what dostow here wyth me, The kinge is went and the courte by-dene, I drede we shalle discouerid be Off the love is vs by-twene;

Sir agravayne at home is he, nyght and day he waytes vs two."
"Nay," he sayd, "my lady fre, I ne thinke not it shalle be so; I come to take my leve of the, Oute of courte or that I go."
"ya swithe that thou armyde be, For thy dwellynge me is fulle woo."

launcelott to his chambyr yede, There riche atyre lay hym by-fore, Armyd hym in noble wede, Off that armure gentylly was shore; Swerd and sheld were good at nede In many batayles that he had bore, And horsyd hym on a grey stede kyng Arthur had hym yeve by-fore;

haldys he none highe way,
The knight that was hardy and fre,
Bot hastis bothe night and day
Faste toward that riche cite,—
Wynchester it hight, for sothe to say,—
There the turnament shuld be.
kinge Arthur in a castelle lay,
Fulle myche there was of game and gle,

For why, men wolde launcelott by-holde And he ne wold not hym self shewe; Wyth his shuldres gonne he folde, And downe he hangid his hede fulle low As he ne might his lymmys welde, Kepit he no bugle blowe; Wele he semyd as he were olde, For-thy ne couth hym no man knowe.

## Le Morte Arthur

The kinge stode on a toure on highte, Sir Evway[n]e clepis he that tyde, "Syr evwayne, knowistow any wight This knight that rides here by-syde?" Sir Evwayne spekis wordis right That ay is hend, is not to hyde, "Sir, it is som olde knighte Is come to se the yonge knightis ride."

They by-helde hym bothe anone
A stounde for the stedis sake,
his hors stomelyd at a stone
That alle his body there-wyth gan shake;
The knight than braundisshid yche a bone
As he the bridelle vp gan take,
There-by wiste they bothe anone
That it was launcelott du lake.

kynge Arthur than spekis he
To sir evwayne there wordis right,
"Welle may launcelot holden be
Off alle the world the beste knight
Off biaute and of bounte,
And sithe is none so moche of myght,
At euery dede beste is he;
And sithe he nold it wist no might,

Sir Evwayn, wille we done hym byde, he wenys that we know hym noght."
"Sir, it is better lette hym ride,
And lette hym do as he hath thoght, he wolle be here nere by-syde
Sithe he thus ferre hedyr hath sought,

We shalle hym know[e] by his dede
And by the hors that he hath brought."

Ane erle wounyd there be-syde The lord of Ascolot was hight; launcelot gonne thedyr ride, And sayd, he wolle there dwelle alle night. They resseyvid hym wyth grete pryde, A riche soper there was dight, his name ganne he hele and hyde, And sayd, he was a strange knight;

Thanne had the erle sonnys two,
That were knightis makide newe;
In that tyme was the maner so,
Whan yonge knightis shuld sheldis show,
Tille the friste yere were a-goo,
To bere armys of one hewe,
Rede, or white, yelew, or bloo,
There-by men yonge knightis knew.

As they satte at there sopere, launcelot to the erle spake thare, "Sir, ys here any bachelere That to the turnament wolle fare?" "I haue two sonnys that me is dere, And now that oonne is seke fulle sare, So in companye that he were myne other sonne I wold were thare:"

"Sir, and thy sonne wille thedir right,
The lenger I wolle hym abyde,
And helpe hym there wyth alle my myght,
That hym none harme shalle be-tyde."
"Sir, the semys a noble kn[i]ght,
Courteyse and hend, is not to hyde;
At morow shalle ye dyne and dight
To-gedir I rede welle that ye ride."

"Syr, of one thinge I wolle you mynne, And be-seche you for to spede, yif here were any armure inne, That I might borow it to this dede." "Sir, my sonne lieth seke here-in, Take his armure and his stede; For my sonnys, men shalle you kenne, Off rede shalle be your bothis wede." Therle had a doughter that was hym dere. Mykelle launcelott she be-helde, hyr rode was rede as blossom on brere, Or floure that springith in the felde; Glad she was to sitte hym nere, The noble knight vnder shelde, Wepinge was hyr moste chere, So mykelle on hym her herte gan helde.

Uppe than rose that mayden stille, And to hyr chamber wente she tho, Downe vppon hir bedde she felle That nighe hyr herte brast in two. launcelot wiste what was hyr wylle, Welle he knew by other mo, hyr brother klepitte he hym tylle, And to hyr chamber gonne they go;

he satte hym downe for the maydens sake vppon hyr bedde there she lay, Courtessely to hyr he spake For to comforte that fayre may.

In hyr armys she gan hym take, And these wordis ganne she say, "Sir, bot yif that ye it make, Saff my lyff no leche may."

"lady," he sayd, "thou moste lette, For me ne giff the no thynge ille, In another stede myne hert is sette, It is not at myne owne wille; In erthe is no thinge that shalle me lette To be thy knight lowde and stille, A-nother tyme we may be mette Whan thou may better speke thy fille."

"Sithe I of the ne may have more, As thou arte hardy knight and fre, In the turnement that thou wold bere Sum signe of myne that men might se:" "lady, thy sleve thou shalte of-shere, I wolle it take for the love of the; So did I neuyr no ladyes ere, Bot one that most hathe lovide me."

On the morow whan it was day,
They dyned, and made them yare,
And than they went forthe on there way
To-gedyr as they bretherne were;
They mette a squyer by the way
That frome the turnament gan fare,
And askyd, yif he couthe them say
Whiche party was the bygger thare;

"Sir Galehod hathe folke the more For sothe, lordingis, as I you telle; But Arthur is the bigger there, he hath knightis stiffe and felle; They ar bold and breme as bare, Evwayne, and boert, and lyonelle." Therlys sonne to hym spake thare, "Sir, wyth them I rede we dwelle."

launcelotte spake, as I you rede,
"Sithe they ar men of grete valoure,
how might we amonge them spede
There alle are stiffe and stronge in stowre?
helpe we them that hath most nede,
Ageyne the beste we shalle welle dore;
And we might there do any dede,
It wold vs torne to more honoure."

launcelot spekis in that tyde
As knight that was hardy and fre,
"To night wyth-oute I rede we byde,
The presse is grete in the cite."
"Sir, I haue an aunte here beside,
A lady of swith grete biaute,
Were it your wille thedir to ride,
Glad of vs than wold she be."

Tho to the castelle gonne they fare
To the lady fayre and bright,
Blithe was the lady thare
That they wold dwelle wyth hyr that night,
hastely was there soper yare
Off mete and drinke rychely dight;
Onne the morow gonne they dyne and fare
Both launcelott and that other knight.

Whan they come in to the felde Myche there was of game and play; A while they hovid, and by-helde how Arthurs knightis rode that day. Galehodis party by-gan to helde, On fote his knightis ar lade away; launcelott stiff was vndyr shelde Thinkis to helpe yif that he may;

Be-syde hym come than sir Evwayne, Breme as any wilde bore, launcelott springis hym ageyne In rede armys that he bare; A dynte he yaff wyth mekille mayne, Sir Evwayne was vn-horsid thare, That alle men wente he had been slayne, So was he woundyd wondyr sare;

Sir boerte thoughte no thinge goode
Whan sir Evwayne vn-horsid was,
Forthe he springis as he were wode
To launcelot, wyth-outen lees.
launcelot hytte hym on the hode;
The nexte way to ground he chese,
Was none so stiff agayne hym stode,
Fulle thynne he made the thikkest prees;

Sir lyonelle be-ganne to tene, And hastely he made hym bowne, To launcelott wyth herte kene he rode, wyth helme and swerd[e] browne; launcelott hitte hym, as I wene, Throughe the helme in-to the crowne, That euyr after it was sene; Bothe hors and man there yede adowne.

The knightis gadride to-gedir thare, And gan wyth crafte there counselle take, "Suche a knight was neuyr are But it were launcelot du lake;" Bot, for the sleve on his creste was thare, For launcelot wold they hym noght take, For he bare nevir none suche by-fore But it were for the quenys sake;

"Off Ascolot he neuyr was
That thus welle beris hym to day."
Ector sayd, wyth-outen lees,
"What he was he wold assay."
A noble stede Ector hym chese,
And forthe rydis glad and gay,
launcelot he mette a-mydde the prese,
By-twene them was no chi[l]dis play;

Ector smote with herte goode
To launcelot that ilke tyde,
Throughe helme in-to his hede it yode,
That nighe loste he alle his pride;
launcelot hytte on the hoode
That his hors felle, and he be syde.
launcelot blyndis in his blode,
Oute of the feld fulle faste gan ride;

Oute of the feld they reden thoo
To a forest highe and hore;
Whan they come by them one two,
Off his helme he takis thore;
"Sir," he sayd, "me is fulle woo,
I drede that ye be hurte fulle sore;
"Nay," he sayd, "it is not so,
But fayne at rest I wold we were."

"Sir, myne aunte is here be-syde,
There we bothe were alle nighte,
Were it youre wille thedir to ride,
She wolle us helpe wyth all hyr might,
And send for lechis this ylke tyde
youre woundis for to hele and dight;
And I my self wille wyth you abyde,
And be youre servante and youre knight."

To the castelle they toke the way,
To the lady fayre and hende;
She sent for lechis, as I you say,
That wonyd bothe ferre and hende;
But by the morow that it was day,
In bede he might hym self not wende,
So sore woundyde there he lay
That welle nighe had he sought his ende.

The kinge arthur wyth mykelle pride Callid his knightis alle hym by, And sayd, "a mounth he wold there byde, And in Wynchester lye." heraudis he dyd go and ride, Another turnamente for to crye; This knight welle be here nere be-syde for he is woundyd bitterlye.

Whan the lettres made were,
The heraudis forth wyth them yede,
Throughe yngland for to fare,
Another turnament for to bede,—
Bad them buske, and make them yare,
Alle that stiffe were on stede.
Thus these lettris sent were
To tho that doughty were of dede:

Tille on a tyme that it be-felle An heraude comys by the way, And at the castelle a night gan dwelle There as launcelot woundyd lay, And of the turnamente gon telle That shulde come on the sonday. launcelot sighes wondyr stille And sayd, "allas! and welle-a-way,

Whan knightis wynne worship and pride, Som auntre shalle hold me a-way As a coward for to abyde; This turnamente, for sothe to say, for me is made this ylke tyde; Thoughe I shuld dye this ylke day Certis I shalle thedyr ride."

The leche aunswerd al so sone
And sayd, "syr, what haue ye thought?
Alle the crafte that I haue done
I wene it wille you helpe right noght.
There is no man vndir the mone,
By him that all this world hath wroght,
Might saue your lyff to that tyme come
That ye vpon your stede were brought;"

"Certis, though I dye this day,
In my bedde I wolle not lye,
Yit had I levir do what I may
Than here to dye thus cowardelye."
The leche anone than went his way,
And wold no lenger dwelle hym by;
his woundis scryved, and stille he lay,
And in his bedde he swownyd thrye.

The lady wept as she were wode,
Whan she sawe he dede wolde be;
Therlis sonne, with sory mode,
The leche agayne clepis he,
And sayd, "thou shalt haue yiftis goode
For why that thou wilte dwelle wyth me:"
Craftely than staunchid he his blode,
And of good comforte bad hym be.

Le Morte Arthur

The heraude than wente on his way At morow whan the day was light, Also swithe as euyr he may, To Wynchester that ylke night; he saluede the kinge for soth to say,—By hym satte syr Evwayne the knight,—And sithe he told upon his playe What he had herd and sene wyth sight;

"Off alle that I have sene wyth sight, Wondir thought me nevir more, Thanne me dyd of a folyd knight That in his bed lay woundid sore: he myght not heve his hede vp-right For alle the world have wonne thare, For angwisshe that he ne ride myght Alle his woundis scryved were."

Sir Evwayne than spekis wordis fre
And to the kynge sayd he there,
"Certis, no cowarde knight is he
Allas! that he nere hole and fere!
Welle I wote that it is he
That we alle of vnhorsyd were;
the turnament is beste lette be,
For sothe that knight may not come there.'

There turnement was than no more, But this departith alle the prese, knightis toke there leve to fare, Ichone his owne way hym chese. To kamelot the kynge went there, There as quene gaynore was he wente haue found launcelot thare, A-way he was wyth-outen lese.

LAUNCELOT sore woundyde lay, knightis sought him fulle wyde; Therle sonne night and day Was alle way hym be-syde; Therle hym self, whan he ryde may, Brought hym home wyth mykelle pride, And made hym bothe game and play Tille he might bothe go and ryde.

Boerte and lyonelle than sware, and at the kinge there leve toke there, "Ageyne they wold come nevir mare Tille they wiste where launcelot were." Ector went with them thare To seche his brodyr that him was dere: many a land they ganne through fare, And sought hym bothe ferre and nere;

Tille on a tyme that it by-felle
That they come by that ylke way,
And at the castelle at mete gan dwelle
There as launcelott woundyd lay.
launcelot they saw, as I you telle,
Walke on the wallis hym to play;
On knees for joye alle they felle,
So blithe men they were that day.

Whan launcelott saw tho ylke thre That he in world[e] louyd beste, A merier metinge might no man se, And sithe he ledde them to reste: Therle hym self, glad was he That he had gotten siche a geste; So was the mayden feyre and fre That alle hyr loue on hym had keste.

11.3.

Whan they were to soper dight,

Bordis were sette and clothis spradde,
Therlis doughter and the knight
To-gedir was sette, as he them badde;
Therlys sonnys, that bothe were wight,
to serve them were nevir sadde,
And therle hym selfe wyth alle his mygh[t]
To make them bothe blyth and glade;

## Le Morte Arthur

Bot Boert, euyr in mynd he thoghte
That launcelot had bene woundyd sore,
"Sir, were it youre wille to hele it noght,
Bot telle where ye thus hurte were?"
"By hym that alle this world hath wrought,"
launcelot hym self swore,
"The dynte shalle be fulle dere bought
yif euyr we may mete vs more."

Ector ne liked that no wight,—
The wordis that he herd there,—
For sorow he loste both strength and might
The colours changid in his leyre.
Boerte than sayd these wordis right,
"Ector, thou may make yvelle chere,
For sothe it is no coward knight
That thou arte of I-manased here."

"Ector," he sayd, "where thou it were That woundid me thus wondir sore?" Ector aumswerd with symple chere, "lord, I ne wiste that ye it wore; A dynte of you I had there, felyd I nevir none so sore; Sir lyonelle by god than swore That myne wolle sene be euyr more."

Sir Boerte than answerd as-tyte As knight that wise was vndir wede; "I hope that none of vs was quite; I had oon that to ground I yede. Sir, your brodyr shalle ye not wite, now knowes either others dede, now know ye how Ector can smyte To helpe you whan ye haue nede."

launcelot loughe wyth herte free That Ector made so mekille sute, "Brother, no thinge drede thou the, For I shalle be bothe hole and quite;

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Though thou have sore woundide me There-of I shalle the nevir wite, But euyr the better loue I the, Suche a dynte that thou can smyte."

Than vppon the thride day
They toke there leve for to fare;
To the courte they wille a-way,
For he wille dwelle a while thare;
"Grete welle my lord, I you pray,
And telle my lady how I fare,
And say, I wylle come whan I may,
And byddith hyr longe no thinge sare."

They toke there leve, wyth-outen lees, And wightely wente vppon there way; To the courte the way they chese, There as the quene Genure lay. The kinge to the foreste is Wyth knightis hym for to play, Good space they had wyth-outen prese There erande to the quene to say;

They knelyd downe by-fore the quene, The knightis that were wise of lere, And sayd, "they had launcelot sene, And thre dayes wyth hym were; And how that he had woundyd bene, And seke he had lye fulle sore, Or ought longe, ye shalle hym sene, he bad you longe no thynge sore."

The quene loughe wyth herte fre, Whan she wiste he was on lyff, "O worthy god, what wele is me, Why ne wiste my lord it also swithe." To the foreste rode these knightis thre To the kinge it to kithe: Ihesu criste than thankis he,

For was he nevir of word so blithe:

he klepyd Sir Gawayne hym nere, And sayd, "certis, that was he That the rede armys bere: Bot now he lyffis, welle is me." Gawayne answerd wyth myld chere, As he that ay was hend and fre, "Was neuyr tithandis me so dere, Bot sore me longis launcelot to se."

At the kinge, and at the quene, Sir Gawayne toke his leve that tyde, And sithe at alle the courte by-dene, And buskis hym wyth mekylle pryde; Tille Ascalot, wyth-outen wene, Also faste as he might ryde, Tille that he haue launcelot sene, Night ne day ne wolle he byde.

By that was launcelot hole and fere, Buskis hym, and makis alle yare, his leue hathe he take there, The mayden wepte for sorow and care; "Sir, yif that youre willis were, Sithe I of the ne may haue mare, Som thinge ye woulde be-leue me here To loke on, whan me longith sare."

launcelot spake wyth herte fre
For to comforte that ladye hende,
"Myne armure shalle I leue wyth the,
And in thy brothers wille I wende;
loke thou ne longe not after me,
For here I may no lenger lende,
longe tyme ne shalle it noght be
That I ne shalle eyther come or sende."

launcelot is redy for to ride, And on his way he went forth right, Sir Gaweyn come aftir on a tyde, And askis after suche a knighte; They reserved hym wyth grete pride, A riche soper there was dight, And sayd, "in herte is noght to hyde, A-way he was for fourtenyght."

Sir Gaweyne gon that mayden take, And satte hym by that swete wight, And spake of launcelot de lake, In alle the world nas suche a knight. The mayden there of launcelot spake, Said, alle hyr loue was on hym light, "For his leman he hathe me take, his armure I you shew[e] mighte:"

"Now damysselle," he sayd anone,
"And I am glad that it is so,
Such a lemman as thou haste oon,
In alle this world ne be no mo;
There is no lady of flesshe ne bone
In this world so thryve or thro,
Thoughe hyr herte were stele or stone,
That might hyr loue hald hym fro;

But damysselle, I be-seche the his sheld that ye wold me shewe; launcelottis, yif that it be, Be the coloures I it knew."

The mayden was bothe hend and fre, And ledde hym to a chambyr newe, launcelottis sheld she lette hym se, And alle his armure forth she drewe.

hendely, than, syr Gawayne
To the mayden there he spake,
"lady," he sayd, "wyth-outen layne,
This is launcelottis shelde de lake;
Damesselle," he sayd, "I am fulle fayne
That he the wold to lemman take,
And I, wyth alle my myght and mayne,
Wille be thy knight, for his sake."

Gawayne thus spake wyth that swete wight What his wille was for to say;
Tille he was to bede i-dighte
Aboute hym was gamme and play.
he toke his leue at erle and knight
On the morow, whan it was day,
And sithen at the mayden brighte,
And forthe he wente vppon his way;

he nyste where that he mighte, ne where that launcelot wold lend, For whan he was oute of sight he was full yvelle for to fynde. he takis hym the way right, And to the courte gon he wende; Glad of hym was kyng and knight, For he was bothe corteyse and hende.

Than it by-felle vppon a tyde, The kinge stode by the quene and spake, Sir gaweyne standis hym be-syde, Ichone tille other there mone gan make, "how longe they might wyth bale abyde The comynge of launcelot du lake." In the courte was litelle pryde, So sore they sighyd for his sake;

"Certis, yif launcelot were on lyff So longe fro courte he nold not be." Sir gawayne answerd also swithe; "There-of no wondir thinkith me; The feyrest lady that is on lyff Tille his lemman chosen hath he, Is noon of vs but wold be blithe Suche a semely for to see."

The kinge Arthur was fulle blythe Off that tithingis for to lere, And askid syr Gawayne also swythe "What mayden that it were?"

"Therlis doughter," he sayd as swithe, "Off Ascolot, as ye may here, There I was made glade and blithe, his sheld the mayde shewid me there."

The quene than said wordis no mo, Bot to hyr chambir sone she yede, And downe vppon hyr bed felle so That nighe of witte she wold wede; "Allas," she sayd, "and welle-a-wo That euyr I aught lyff in lede, The beste body is loste me fro That euyr in stoure by-strode stede."

ladyes that aboute hyr stode, That wiste of hyr previte Bad hyr "be of comforte gode, lette no man suche semblant se."

A bed they made wyth sory mode There-in they brought that lady fre, Euyr she wepte as she were wode; Off hyr they had full grete pite.

So sore seke the quene lay,
Off sorow might she nevir lette,
Tille it felle vppon a day
Sir lyonelle and Ector yede
In to the foreste, them to play,
That floured was and braunchid swete;
And as they went by the way,
With launcelot gonne they mete.

What wondyr was though they were blith Whan they there master saw wyth sight, On knees they felle also swithe And alle they thankid god alle-myght. Ioye it was to se and lythe The metynge of the noble knighte, And sithe he freyned also swithe "how fares my lady brighte?"

Than answerd the knightis fre, And sayd, that she was seke fulle sare, "Grete doelle it is to here and se, So mekylle she is in sorow and care; The kinge a sory man ys he, In courte for that ye come no mare; Dede he wenys that ye be, And alle the courte both lasse and mare.

Sir, were it youre wille wyth vs to fare
For to speke wyth the quene,
Blithe I wote wele that she ware
Yif that she had you onys sene;
The kynge is mekille in sorow and care,
And so ys alle the courte by-dene;
Dede they were welle that ye are,
Frome courte for ye so longe have bene."

He grauntis them at that ylke sythe Home that he wille wyth them ride, There-fore the knightis were fulle blithe And buskede them wyth mykelle pride; To the courte also swithe, Nyght ne day they nolde abyde, The kinge and alle the courte was blithe The tydandis whan they herde that tyde.

The kinge stode in a toure on highe,
Be-sydes hym standis syr Gawayne;
launcelotte, whan that they sighe,
Were nevir men on mold so fayne;
They ranne as swithe as euyr they might
Oute at the gates hym agayne,
Was nevir tidandis to them so light,
The kinge hym kissyd, and knight and swayne.

To a chamber the kynge hym lade,—feyre in armys they gon hym folde, And sette hym on a riche bedde That sprad was wyth a clothe of golde; To serve hym was there no man sade, Ne dight hym as hym self[e] wolde, To make hym bothe blithe and glade, And sithe auntres he them tolde.

Thre dayes in courte he dwellid there,
That he ne spake not wyth the quene,
So myche prees was ay hym nere,
The kyng hym lad, and courte by-dene.
The lady, bright as blossom on brere,
Sore she longid hym to sene,
Wepinge was hyr moste chere
Thoughe she ne durste hyr to no man mene.

Than it felle vppon a day,
The kinge gan on huntynge ride
In to the foreste hym to playe
Wyth his knightis be his syde;
launcelot longe in bede laye,
With the quene he thought to byde;
To the chamber he toke the way,
And salues hyr wyth mekelle pryde;

Friste he kissyd that lady shene, And salues hyr wyth herte fre, And sithe the ladyes alle by-dene, For ioye the teres ranne on there ble; "Welle-a-way," than sayd the quene, "launcelot, that I euyr the se, The loue that hathe be vs by-twene That it shalle thus departed be;

Allas, launcelot du lake,
Sithe thou hast alle my hert in wolde
Therlis doughter that thou wold take
Off ascalot, as men me tolde.
Now thou leviste for hyr sake
Alle thy dede of armys bolde,
I may wofully wepe and wake
In clay tylle I be clongyn colde;

Te Morte Arthur

But, launcelot, I be-seche the here
Sithe it nedelyngis shalle be so,
That thou nevir more discouyr
The loue that hathe bene be-twyxe vs two,
Ne that she nevir be wyth the so dere,
Dede of armys that thou be fro,
That I may of thy body here
Sithe I shalle thus be-leve in woo."

launcelot fulle stille than stode, his herte was hevy as any stone, So sory he wexe in his mode, For routhe hym thought it alle to torne; "Madame," he said, "for crosse and rode, What by-tokenyth alle this mone? By hym that bought me wyth his blode, Off these tydandes know I none;

But by these wordis thynkith me A-way ye wolde that I ware; Now haue goode day, my lady fre, For sothe thou seest me nevir mare."

Oute of the chambyr than wendis he: Now whethir his hert was fulle of care! The lady swownyde sithes thre Almost she slew hyr selfe thare:

launcelot to his chambyr yede
There his owne atyre in lay,
Armyd hym in a noble wede
Thoughe in his hert were litelle play:
Forthe he spronge as sparke of glede
Withe sory chere, for sothe to say,
Vp he worthis vppon his stede,
And to a foreste he wendis a-way.

Tithyngis come in to the halle That launcelot was vppon his stede, Oute than ranne the knightis alle Off there witte as they wold wede, Boerte de Gawnes, and lyonelle, And Ector, that doughty was of dede, Folowyn hym on horsys snelle, Fulle lowde gonne they blowe and grede;

There might no man hym ovir-take, he rode in to a forest grene;
Moche mone gonne they make,
The knightis that were bold and kene;
"Allas, they sayd, launcelot du lake,
That euyr shuldistow se the quene!"
And hyr they cursyd for his sake
That euyr loue was them by-twene;

They ne wiste nevir where to fare, Ne to what land that he wolde; Ageyne they went wyth sighyng sare, The knightis that were kene and bolde; The quene they found in swownyng thare, hyr comely tresses all vnfolde; They were so fulle of sorowe and care, There was none hyr comfort wolde.

The kynge than hastis hym for his sake And home than come that ylke day, And asked after launcelot du lake, And they sayd, "he is gone a-way." The quene was in hyr bed alle nakyd, And sore seke in hyr chambyr lay, So moche mone the kynge gon make, There was no knight that lust to playe;

The kinge klepis Gawayne that day
And alle his sorow told hym tylle,
"Now ys launcelot gone away,
And come, I wote, he nevir wille,"
He sayd, "allas, and wellaway!"
Sighed sore, and gaff hym ylle,
"The lord that we haue lovid alle way,
In courte why nylle he nevir dwelle?"

Gawayn spekis in that tyde,
And to the kynge sayd he there,
"Sir, in this castelle shalle ye byde,
Comforte you, and make good chere,
And we shalle bothe go and ride
In all landis ferre and nere,
So preuely he shall hym not hyde
Throughe happe that we ne shall of hym here."

KNYGHTIS than sought hym wide,
Off launcelot myght they not here,
Tylle it felle vppon a tyde,
quene Genure, bright as blossom on brere,
To mete is sette that ylke tyde,
And syr Gawayne satte hyr nere,
And vppon that other syde
A scottysshe knight that was hyr dere;

A squyer in the courte hath thought
That ylke day, yif that he myght,
With a poyson that he hath wrought
To slae Gawayne, yif that he mighte.
In frute he hath it forthe brought
And sette by-fore the quene bright,
An appille ouereste lay on lofte
There the poyson was in dighte;

For he thoughte the lady bright Wold the beste to Gawayne bede, But she it yaff to the scottisshe knight, For he was of an vnkouth stede; There-of he ete a lytelle wight; Off tresoun toke there no man hede, There he loste bothe mayne and might, And diede sone, as I you rede:

They nyste what it myght by-mene But vp hym sterte syr Gawayne, And sithen alle the courte by-dene, And ouyr the bord they haue hym drayne; "Wellaway," than sayd the quene,
"Ihesu Criste, what may I sayne?
Certis now wille alle men wene
My self that I the knight haue slayne."

Triacle there was anone forthe brought, The quene wende to save his lyffe, But alle that myght helpe hym noght, For there the knight is dede as swithe.

So grete sorow the quene than wrought, Grete doele it was to se and lythe, "lord, suche syttes me haue sought Why ne may I nevir be blithe."

Knyghtis done none other myght,
Bot beryed hym wyth doele i-noughe,
At a chapelle, wyth riche lyghte,
In a foreste by a swoughe;
A riche toumbe they dyde by dight,
A crafty clerke the lettres droughe,
how there lay the shottysshe knyght
That quene Genure wyth poyson slough.

Aftyr thys a tyme by-felle,
To the courte there come a knyght,
hys brodyr he was, as I you telle,
And syr mador for sothe he highte;
he was an hardy man and snelle
In turnamente and eke in fight,
And mykelle louyd in courte to duelle,
For he was man of myche myght.

Than it felle vppon a day,
Sir mador wente wyth mekille pride
Into the foreste hym for to play,
That floured was and braunchid wyde;
he found a chapelle in his way
As he cam by a cloughis syde,
There his owne brodyr lay,
And there at masse he thought to abyde;

A riche toumbe he found there dight With lettres that were fayre i-noughe; A while he stode, and redde it right; Grete sorow than to his herte droughe; he found the name of the scottysshe knight That quene Genure wyth poysoun sloughe; There he loste bothe mayne and myght, And ouyr the toumbe he felle in swoughe.

Off swownynge whan he myght awake, his herte was heuy as any lede, he sighed for his brothers sake, he ne wiste what was beste rede. The way to courte gan he take, Off no thinge ne stode he drede, A lovde crye on the quene gonne make In chalengynge of his brothers dede.

The kynge fulle sore than gan hym drede, For he myght not be ageyne the right; The quene of witte wolde nyghe wede, Thoughe that she agilte had no wight; She moste there by-know the dede, Or fynde a man for hyr to fight; For welle she wiste to deth she yede Yif she were on a queste of knightis.

Thoughe Arthure were kynge the land to welde, he myght not be agayne the righte;
A day he toke wyth spere and shelde
To fynd a man for hyr to fight,
That she shalle eyther to deth hyr yelde
Or putte hyr on a queste of knightis;
There-to bothe there handis vp-helde
And trewly there trouthis plighte.

Whan they in certeyne had sette a day, And that quarelle vndir-take, The word sprange sone throw eche contrey What sorow that quene genure ganne make; So at the laste, shortely to say, Word come to launcelot du lake, There, as he seke i-woundyd lay. Men tolde hym holly alle the wrake,—

"how that quene Genure the bright had slayne wyth grete treasoun A swithe noble scottishe knight At the mete wyth stronge poysoun; There-for a day was taken right, That she shuld fynd a knight fulle bowne For hyr sake for to fighte, Or ellis be brente wyth-oute raunsowne."

Whan that launcelot du lake had herde holly alle this fare, Grete sorow gon he to hym take For the quene was in suche care, And swore to venge hyr of that wrake That day yif that he lyvand ware; Than payned he hym his sorows to slake, And wexe as breme as any bare.

Now leve we launcelot there he was withe the ermyte in the forest grene, And telle we forthe of the case

That touchith Arthur the kynge so kene.

Sir Gawayne on the morne to conselle he tase,

And mornyd sore for the quene, In to a toure than he hym has, And ordeyned the beste there them by-twene;

And as they in there talkynge stode
To ordeyne how it beste myght be,
A feyre ryuer vndyr the toure yode,
And sone there-in gonne they see
A lytelle bote of shappe fulle goode
To-theyme-ward wyth the streme gon te,
There myght none feyrer sayle on flode,
Ne better forgid as of tree.

Whan kynge Arthure saw that sighte, he wondrid of the riche apparrayle That was aboute the bote i-dighte, So richely was it coueryd sanzfayle In maner of a voute wyth clothis idighte, Alle shynand as gold as yt ganne sayle: Than sayd Syr Gawayne the good knight "This bote is of a ryche entayle."

"For sothe, syr," sayd the kynge tho,
"Suche one sawgh I neuyr are;
Thedir I rede now that we go,
Som aventures shalle we se thare;
And yif it be wyth-in dight so
As with-oute, or gayer mare,
I darre sauely say therto
By-gynne wille auntres or aught yare."

Oute of the toure adowne they wente, The kynge arthur and syr Gawayne; To the bote they yede wyth-oute stynte They two allone, for sothe to sayne; And whan they come there as it lente, They by-helde it faste, is not to layne; A clothe that ouer the bote was bente, Sir Gawayne lyfte vp, and went in bayne.

Whan they were in, wyth-outen lese Fulle richely arayed they it founde, And in the myddis a feyre bedde was For any kynge of Cristene londe. Than as swithe, or they wold sese, The koverlet lyfte they vp wyth hande, A dede woman they sighe ther was, The fayrest mayde that myght be founde.

To sir Gawayne than sayd the kynge, "For sothe, Dethe was to vn-hende Whan he wold thus fayre a thinge Thus yonge oute of the world do wende; For hyr biaute, wyth oute lesynge, I wold fayne wete of hyr kynde, What she was, this sweet derelynge, And in hyr lyff where she gonne lende."

Sir Gawayne his eyen than on hyr caste,
And by-held hyr fast wyth herte fre,
So that he knew welle at the laste

That the mayde of Ascalote was she,
Whiche he som tyme had wowyd faste
his owne leman for to be;
But she aunsweryd hym ay in haste,

"To none bot launcelot wold she te."

To the kinge than sayd sir Gawayne tho, "Thinke ye not on this endris day Whan my lady the quene and we two stode to-gedir in youre play, Off a mayde I told you tho That launcelot louyd paramoure ay." "Gawayne, for sothe," the kynge sayd tho, "Whan thou it saydiste, wele thinke I may:"

"For sothe, syr," than sayd sir Gawayne,
"This is the mayd that I of spake:
most in this world, is not to layne,
She lovid launcelot du lake."
"For sothe," the kynge than gon to sayne,
"me rewith the deth of hyr for his sake,
The inchesoun wold I wete fulle fayne,
For sorow I trow deth gon hyre take."

Than sir Gawayne, the good knight,
Sought aboute hyr wyth-oute stynte,
And found a purs fulle riche a righte
Wyth gold and perlis that was i-bente;
Alle empty semyd it noght to sight.
That purs fulle sone in honde he hente,
A letter there-of than oute he twight:
Than wete they wold fayne what it mente;

What there was wreten, wete they wolde. And sir Gawayn it toke the kynge, And bad hym openyd that he sholde. So dyde he sone wyth-oute lesynge; Than found he whan it was vn-folde Bothe the ende and the by-gynnynge, Thus was it wreten, as men me tolde, Off that fayre maydens deynge;

"To kynge Arthur, and alle his knightis That longe to the Rounde table, That corteyse bene, and most of myghtis Doughty, and noble, trew, and stable, And most worshipfulle in all fyghtis To the nedefulle, helpinge and profitable, The mayde of Ascalot to rightis Sendith gretinge, wyth-outen fable:

"To you alle my playnte I make
Off the wronge that me is wroghte,
But noght in maner to vndir-take
That any of you sholde mend it ought;
Bot onely I say, for this sake
That thoughe this world were throw sought,
Men shold no where fynd your make
Alle noblisse to fynde that myght be sought;

"There-fore to you to vndirstand
That for I trewly many a day
Haue lovid lelyest in londe,
Dethe hathe me fette of this world away;
To wete for whome yif ye wille founde
That I so longe for in langoure lay,
To say the sothe wille I noght wounde,
For gaynes it not for to say nay;

"To say you the sothe tale, For whome I have suffred this woo,—I say deth hathe me take wyth bale For the noblest knight that may go; Is none so doughty dyntis to dale, So ryalle, ne so fayre ther-to, But so churlysshe of maners in feld ne hale Ne know I none, of frende, ne fo;

"Off foo, ne frend, the sothe to say,
So vn-hend of thewis is there none,
his gentilnesse was alle a-way,
Alle churlysshe maners he had in wone;
For, for no thinge that I coude pray,
Knelynge, ne wepinge, wyth rewfulle mone,
To be my leman he sayd euyr nay,
And sayd shortely he wold haue none.

"For-thy, lordis, for his sake
I toke to herte grete sorow and care,
So at the laste deth gonne me take,
So that I might lyve na mare;
For trew louynge had I suche wrake,
And was of blysse i-browghte alle bare,
Alle was for launcelote du lake,—
To wete wisely for whom it ware."

When that arthure the noble kyng, had redde the letter, and kene the name, he said to gawayne, wyth-oute lesynge—"That launcelott was gretly to blame, And had hym wonne a reproovyng For euyr, and a wikkyd fame Sythe she deide for gre louyng, that he her refusyde, it may hym shame."

to the kyng, than sayd syr gawayne,
"I gabbyd on hym thys gendyr day,
that he longede whan I gon sayne
Wyth lady other which som othyr maye;
bot sothe than sayde ye, is not to layne,
that he nolde nought hys loue laye
In so low a place in vayne,
But on a pryse lady, and a gaye."

1: 2

"Syr gawayne," sayd the kyng thoo,
"What is now thy best rede?
how mow we wyth thys maydyn do?"
Syr gawayne sayd, "so god me spede,
Iff that ye wille assent ther-to,
Worshippffully we shulle hyr lede
In to the palys, and bery her so
As fallys a dukys doughter in dede."

ther-to the kyng assentid sone; Syr gawayne dyd men sone be gare, And worshippfully, as felle to done, In-to the palyse they her bare. the kyng than tolde wyth-out lone to alle hys barons, lesse and mare how launcelot nolde noughte graunte hyr bone, ther-fore she dyed for sorow and care.

to the quene than went syr gawayne And gon to telle hyr alle the case, "For sothe, madame," he gon to sayne, "I yelde me gyllty of a trespas, I gabbyd on launcelot, is not to layne, of that I tolde yow in thys place, I sayde that hys bydyng bayne the dukys doughter of Ascolote was;

off ascolot that m[a]yden ffre I sayd you she was hys leman; that I so gabbyd, it reweth me, for alle the sothe now telle I can; he nold hyr nought, we mowe welle se; For-thy, dede is that white as swanne, thys lettere there-of warrannte wolle be, She playnethe on launcelot to eche man."

the quene was as wrothe as wynde, And to syr gawayne sayd she than, "For sothe, syr, thou were to vnkynde to gabbe so vppon any man, but thou haddyst wist the sothe in mynde Whether that it were sothe ore nan; thy curtessy was alle be-hynde Whan thou thoo sawes freste be-gan,

thy worshippe thou vn-dediste gretlyche Suche wronge to wite that good knyght; I trowe he ne a-gulte the neuyr nought myche Why that thou oughtiste wyth no ryghte, to gabbe on hym so wylanlyche thus be-hynde hym, oute of hys syghte; And, syr, thou ne woste not ryght wiseliche What harme hathe falle there-of, and myght.

I wende thou haddiste be stable and trewe And fulle of alle curtessye, bot now me thynke thy maners newe, thay bene all tournyd to vilanye; now thou on knyghtis makeste thy glewe to lye vppon hem for envye; Who that the worshippeth, it may hem rewe, there-fore devoyede my companye."

Syr gawayne than slyghly wente awaye, he syghe the quene a-greuyd sore, No more to hyr than wolde he saye, Bot trowyd hyr wrathe haue euyr more. the quene than, as she nyghe wode were, Wryngyd hyr handys, and said, "welle awaye, Allas, in world that I was bore, 'that I am a wreche' welle say I may.

herte, allas, why were thou wode to trowe that launcelot du lake Were so falsse and fykelle of mode, A-nother lemman than the to take; nay, sertes, for alle thys worldis goode, he nolde to me haue wrought suche wrake." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A page is gone from the manuscript here.

To fynde a man for hyr to feyghte, Or elles yeld her to be brente Iff she were on a quest of knyghtis, Wele sche wiste she sholde be shente, Thoughe that she agilte hade no wight, No lenger lyffe myght hyr be lente.

The kynge than sighed, and gaffe hyr ylle, And to syr gawayne than he yede, To bors de gawnes, and lyonelle, To estor, that doughty was [of] dede, And askyd, yif eny werere in wille To helpe hym in that mykylle nede. The quene one knes be-fore hem felle, That neyghe oute of hyr wite she yede;

The knyghtes answeryd wyth lytelle pride, her he[r]tes was fulle of sorow and woughe, Sayd, "alle we saughe and satte be-syde The knyght when she wyth poyson sloughe; And sythe, in herte is nought to hyde, Syr gawayne ouer the bord hym droughe; A-gayne the ryght we wille not ryde, We saw the sothe verely i-noughe."

The quene wepte and sighed sore,
To bors de gawnes went she thoo,
On knes by-fore hym felle she thore,
That nyghe her hert braste in two;
"lord bors," she seyde, "thyn ore,
To day I shalle to dethe goo,
Bot yiffe thy worthy wylle wore,
To brynge my lyffe oute of thys woo."

Bors de gawnes stille stode, And wrothe a-way hys ygen wente, "Madame," he sayde "by crosse on rode Thou art wele worthy to be brente; The nobleste bodye of flesshe and blode That euyr was yete in erthe lente, For thy wille and thy wykkyd mode Out of oure companye is wente." Than she wepte, and gaffe hyr ille, And to syr gawayne than she yede, On knes downe be-fore hym felle, That neigh oute of-hyr witte she yede: "Me[r]cy," she cryed loude and shrylle, "Lord, as I no gilt haue of thys dede, Yif it were thy worthy wille To day to helpe me in thys nede."

Gawayne answeryd wyth litelle pride, Hys hert was fulle of sorow and woughe, "Dame, saw I not, and sat be-syde The knyght whan thou wyth poyson sloughe; And sythe, in hert is not to hyde, My selfe ouer the bord hym droughe: A-gayne the ryght wille I not ryde, I sawghe the sothe verrye i-noughe."

Than she wente to lyonelle,
That euer had bene her owne knyght,
On knes downe be-fore hym felle,
That neyghe she lost mayne and myght;
"Mercy," she cryed loude and shrylle,
"lord, as I ne haue gilte no wyght,
Yif it were thy worthy wylle,
for my lyffe to take thys fyght."

"Madame, how may thou to us take, And wote thy selfe so wytterly That thou hast launcelot du lake Brought oute of ower companye; We may syghe, and monynge make, Whan we se knyghtis kene in crye: Be hym that me to man gan shape, We ar glade that thou it a-bye."

Than fulle sore she gan hyr drede; Welle she wiste hyr lyffe was lorne, loude gon she wepe and grede, And estor kneles she be-forne; "For hym that on the rode gon sprede, And for vs bare the crone of thorne, Estor, helpe now in thys nede, Or certes to day my lyfe is lorne!"

"Madame, how may thou to us take, Or, how sholde I for the feyght? Take the now launcelot du lake That euyr has bene thyn owne knyght; My dere brother, for thy sake I ne shalle hym neuyr se wyth sight; Cursyde be he that the batalle take To saue thy lyffe a-gayne the ryghte."

Ther wolde no man the batayle take, The quene wente to her chambyr soo, So dulefully mone gon she make That nyghe hyr hert brast in twoo; For sorow gon she sheuer and quake, And sayd, "Allas, and wele a woo, Why nade I now launcelot du lake; Alle the curte nolde me noght sloo;

Yuelle haue I be-sette the dede That I haue worshipped so many a knyght <sup>1</sup>

[That] For my lyffe darre take a fight. lord, kynge of alle thede,
That alle the worlde shalle rede and ryght!
launcelot, thou saue and hede,
Sithe I ne shalle neuyr hym se wyth syght."

THE quene wepte, and gaue hyr ylle, Whan she sawe the fyre was yare, than mornyd she fulle stille; To bors de gawnys went sho thare,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A line is wanting here in the MS., and Dr. Furnivall suggested it should read:—

<sup>&</sup>quot;And I have no man in my nede."

By-sought hym, yif it were hys wille, To helpe hyr in hyr mekylle care, In swounynge she be-fore hym felle, That wordys myght sho speke no mare.

Whan bors saw the quene so bryght,
Of her he hade grete pyte,
In hys armys he helde her vpe ryght,
Bade hyr of good comfort be;
"Madame, but there come a better knyght
That wolde the bataile take for the,
I shalle my selue for the fighte
Whyle any lyffe may laste in me."

Than was the quene wonder blythe,
That bors de gawnys wolde for her feyght,
That nere for ioye she swounyd swythe
But as that he her helde vp-ryght;
To hyr chambre he led hyr blythe,
To ladyes and to maydens bryght,
And bad, she shulde it to no man kythe,
Tylle he were armyd and redy dyght.

Bors, that was bolde and kene, Clepyd alle hys other knyghtis, And tokyn conselle hem be-twene, The beste that thay couthe and myght, how that he hathe hyght the quene, "That ilke day for hyr to feyght A-yenste Syr mador fulle of tene, To saue hyr lyfe yife that he myght."

The knyghtis answerd wyth wo and wrake, And sayd, "they wyste wetterlye That she hathe launcelot du lake Browght oute of ouere companye; Nys not that nolde thys bataile take Ere she hade any vylanye; But we nylle not so glad hyr make By-fore we ne suffre hyr to be sorye."

Bors, and lionelle the knyght, Estor, that doughty was of dede, To the forest than went thay ryght, There orysons at the chapelle to bede To oure lord god alle fulle of myght, That day sholde lene hem wele to spede, A grace to venquesshe the feyght; Of syr mador thay hade grete drede.

As they came by the forest syde There orysons for to make,
The nobleste knyght than saue thay ryde That euer was in erthe shape;
hys loreme lemyd alle wyth pride,
stede and armure alle was blake,
hys name is noght to hele and hyde,
he hyght Syr launcelot du lake:

What wondyr was thoughe they were blythe Whan they ther mayster se wyth syght, On knes felle thay asswythe, And thankyd alle to god alle-myght; Ioye it was to here and lythe The metynge of the noble knyght.

And after he askid also swythe, "how now farys my lady bryght?"

Bors than tolde hym alle the ryght,— It was no lenger for to hyde,— "how there dyed a scottysche knyght Atte the mete the quene besyde;" "To day, syr, is here dethe alle dyght, It may no lenger be to byde, And I for hyr haue take the feyght;

Syr mador, stronge thought one he be, I hope he shalle welle proue hys myght," "To the courte now wende ye thre, And recoumforte my lady bryghte, Bot loke ye speke no word of me, I wolle come as a strange knyght,"

launcelot, that was mochelle of myght,
A-bydys in the forest grene;
To the courte wente these othyr knyghtis
For to recomforte the quene,
To make hyr glade wyth alle theyre myght;
Grete ioye they made hem by-twene,
For why, she ne sholde drede no wyght;
Off goode comforte they bade her bene.

Bordes were sette, and clothys sprede, —
The kyng hym-selfe is gone to sytte,
The quene is to the table lade,
Wyth chekys that were wanne and wete;
Off sorow were they neury vn-sad,
Myght they neyther drynke ne ete,
The quene of dethe was sore a-drade,
That grymly terys gone she lete.

And as thay were at the thryd mese,
The kynge and alle the courte be-dene,
Syr mador alle redy was
Wyth helme and shelde and haubarke shene;
A-monge hem alle be-fore the dese
He bloweth oute vppon the quene,
To haue hys ryght, wyth-outen lese,
As were the covenantes hem by-twene.

The kyng lokyde one alle hys knyghtis; Was he neuere yet so woo; Sawhe neuyr on hym dyght, A-yenste Syr mador for to goo. Syr mador "swore, by goddys myght, As he was man of herte thro, Bot yif he hastely haue hys ryght A-monge hem alle, he sholde hyr slo."

Than spake the kynge of mekelle myght, That ay was cortayse and hende, "Syr, lete vs ete, and sythen us dyght, Thys day nys nought yit gone to the ende;

Yet myght there come suche a knyght, Yif goddys wylle were hym to sende, To fynde the thy fylle of fyghte, Or the sonne to grounde wende."

Bors than loughe on lyonelle,
Wyste no man of here hertys worde,
hys chambyr a-none he wendys tylle
Wyth-oute any othyr worde;
Armyd hym at alle hys wille
Wyth helme, and haubarke, spere, and sworde;
A-gayne than comys he fulle stylle
And sette hym downe to the borde.

The terys ranne on the kyngis kne
For ioye that he sawe bors adyght,
Up he rose, wyth hert[e] free,
And bors in armys clyppis ryght,
And sayd, "bors, god for-yelde it the,
In thys nede that thow wolde fyghte,
Welle acquyteste thou it me
That I haue worshipped any knyght."

Than as Syr mador loudeste spake,
The quene of treson to by-calle,
Comys syr launcelot du lake
Rydand ryght in [to] the halle.
hys stede and armure alle was blake,
hys visere ouer hys ygen falle;
Many a man by-gonne to quake,
A-drade of hym nyghe were they alle.

Then spake the kynge, mykelle of myght,
That hend was in iche a sythe,
"Syr, is it youre wille to lyghte,
Ete and drynke, and make you blythe?"
launcelot spake as a strange knyght,
"Nay syr," he sayd as swythe,
"I herde telle here of a fight,
I come to saue a ladyes lyue;

Yeuelle hathe the quene by-sette her dedys, That she hathe worsshippid many a knyght, And she hathe no man in her nedys, That for hyr lyfe dare take a fight. Thou, that hyr of treson gredys, Hastely that thow be dyghte; Oute of thy witte thoughe that thou wendis, To day thou shalt proue alle thy myght."

Than was Syr mador also blythe
As foule of day after the nyght,
To hys stede he wente than sythe,
As man that was of moche myght.
To the felde than ryde thay swythe,
hem folowes bothe kyng and knyght
The bataile for to se and lythe.

Saugh nevir no man a stronger fyght,— Vn-horsid were bothe knightis kene, They metten wyth so myche mayne, And sythe thay faught wyth swerdys kene, Bothe on fote, for sothe to sayne. In alle the batailles that launcelot had bene, Wyth hard acountres hym a-gayne, In poynte hade he nevir bene So nyghe hande for to haue be slayne.

There was so wondyr stronge a fyghte, O fote nolde nouther fle ne founde Frome loughe none tylle late nyght, Bot gyffen many a wofulle wounde: launcelot than gaffe a dynte wyth myght, Syr mador fallys at laste to grounde, "Mercy," cryes that noble knyght, Fore he was seke, and sore vnsound.

Thoughe launcelot were breme as bore, Fulle stournely he ganne vp stande, O dynte wolde he smyte no more, hys swerd he threwe oute of hys hande.

Syr mador by god than sware, "I haue foughte in many a lande With knyghtis both lesse and mare, And neuyr yit ere my mache I founde;

Bot, Syr, a prayer I wolde make, For thynge that ye loue moste on lyfe, And for oure swete lady sake, youer name that ye wolde me kythe." launcelot gan hys viser vp take, And hendely hym shewed that sythe: Whan he saughe launcelot du lake, Was neuvr man on molde so blythe;

"lord," thane said he, "welle is me, Myne auauncement that I may make, That I haue stande on dynte of the, And foughten wyth launcelot du lake; My brothers dethe for-geffen be To the quene for thy sake."

launcelot hym kyste wyth herte fre, And in hys armys gan hym vp take:

Kynge Arthur than loude spake
A-monge hys knyghtis to the quene,
"Ga, yonder is launcelot du lake
Yiff I hym euyr wyth syght haue sene."
Thay ryden and ronne than for hys sake,
The kynge and alle hys knyghtis kene;
In hys armys he gon hym take,
The kynge hym kyste and courte by-dene.

THAN was the quene glade i-noghe, Whan she saw launcelot du lake, That nyghe for ioy she felle in swoughe, Bot as the lordys hyr gan vp take; The knyghtis alle wepte and loughe For ioye as thay to-gedyr spake; Withe Syr mador, wyth-outen woughe, Fulle sone acordement gon they make.

It was no lenger for to a-byde,
Bot to the castelle thay rode as swythe,
Withe trompys and wyth mykelle pryde,
That ioy it was to here and lythe.
Thoughe syr mador myght not go ne ryde,
To the curte is he brought that sythe,
And knyghtis vppon iche a syde
To make hym bothe glad and blythe.

The squeers than were takyn alle,
And thay ar put in harde payne
Whiche that seruyd in the halle
Whan the knyght was wyth poyson slayne.
There he grauntyd a-monge hem alle,—
It myght no lenger be to layne,—
How in an appelle he dede the galle,
And hadde it thought to syr gawayne.

Whan syr mador herde alle the ryght, That no gylte hadde the lady shene, For sorowe he loste mayne and myghte, And on knees felle be-fore the quene. launcelot then hym helde vppe ryghte, For loue that was them be-twene, hym kyste bothe kynge and knyght, And sythen alle the curte by-dene.

The squyer than was done to shende, As it was bothe lawe and ryght, Drawen and hongyd, and for-brende, Be-fore syr mador the noble knyghte. In the castelle thay gan forthe lende, The ioyus garde than was it hyghte, launcelot that was so hende Thay honouryd hym wyth alle ther myght.

A TYME be-felle, so the to sayne, the knyghtis stode in chambyr and spake, Bothe gaheriet, and syr gawayne, And mordreite, that mykelle couthe of wrake;

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#### Le Morte Arthur

"Allas," than sayde syr Agrawayne,
"how fals men schalle we vs make,
And how longe shalle we hele and layne
The treson of launcelote du lake;

Wele we wote, wyth-outen wene,
The kynge arthur oure eme sholde be,
And launcelote lyes by the quene;
A-geyne the knyke 1 trator is he,
And that wote alle the curte by-dene,
And iche day it here and see:
To the kynge we shulde it mene,
Yif ye wille do by the counselle of me."

"Wele wote we," sayd syr gawayne,
"That we ar of the kyngis kynne,
And launcelot is so mykylle of mayne,
That suche wordys were better blynne;
Welle wote thou, brothyr agrawayne,
There-of shulde we bot harmys wynne;
Yit were it better to hele and layne,
Than werre and wrake thus to be-gynne;

Welle wote thow, brother agrawayne, launcelot is hardy knyght and thro, kynge and courte hade ofte bene slayne Nad he bene better than we mo; And sythen myght I neuyr sayne The loue that has bene by-twene vs twoo; launcelot shalle I neuyr be-trayne, By-hynde hys bake to be hys foo.

launcelot is kynges sonne fulle good, And therto hardy knyght and bolde, And sythen, and hym ned by-stode, Many a lande wolde wyth hym holde; Shedde ther sholde be mykelle blode For thys tale, yiffe it were tolde." Syr Agrawayne he were fulle wode That suche a thynge be-gynne wolde.

1. For kynge.

Than, thus gatys as the knyghtis stode, Gawayne and alle that other pres, In come the kynge, wyth mylde mode: Gawayne that sayd "felaus, pees." The kynge for wrathe was neghe wode, For to wette what it was.

Aggrawayne swore by crosse and rode, "I shalle it you telle wyth-oute lees."

Gawayne to hys chambyr wente, Off thys tale nolde he noght here, Gaheriet and gaheryes, of hys a-sente Withe here brother went they there: Welle they wyste that alle was shente, And syr gawayne by god than sware, "here now [is] made a comsemente, That bethe not fynysshyd many a yere."

Syr Agrawayne tolde alle be-dene
To the kynge, wyth symple chere,
"How launcelot liggys by the quene,
And so has done fulle many a yere,
And that wote alle the courte by-dene
And iche day it se and here;
And we haue false, and treytours, bene,
That we ne wolde neuyr to you dyskere."

"Allas," than sayd the kynge there,
"Certes that were grete pyte,
So as man nad neuyr yit more
Off biaute ne of bounte;
Ne man in worlde was neuyr yit ore
Off so mykylle noblyte;
Allas, fulle grete duelle it were,
In hym shulde any treson be;

But sythe it is so, wyth-outen fayle, Syr Agrawayne, so god the rede, What were now thy beste consayle, For to take hym wyth the dede?

he is man of suche apparayle, Off hym I haue fulle mychelle drede, Alle the courte nolde hym assayle Yiff he were armyd vppon hys stede."

"Syr, ye and alle the courte by-dene, Wendythe to morowe on huntynge ryght; And sythen send word to the quene That ye wille dwelle wyth-oute alle nyght; And I, and other xii knyghtes kene, Fulle preuely we shalle vs dyght, We shalle hym haue wyth-outen wene To morow or any day by lyght."

On the morow wyth alle the courte by-dene The kynge gonne on huntynge ryde, And sythen he sent word to the quene, That he wolde alle nyght oute abyde: Aggrawayne, wyth xii knyghtys kene, Atte home be-lefte that ilke tyde; Off alle the day they were not sene, So prewely thay gonne hem hyde.

Tho was the quene wondyr blythe,
That the kynge wolde at the foreste dwelle,
To launcelot she sente as swythe,
And bad that he shulde come her tille.
Syr bors de gawnes be-ganne to lythe,
Thoughe hys herte lyked ille,
"Syr," he said, "I wolde you kythe
A word, yif that it were your wille;

Syr, to nyght I rede ye dwelle; I drede ther be som treson dight Withe Agrawayne, that is so felle, That waites you bothe day and nyght. Off alle that ye haue gonne hyr tylle, Ne greuyd me neuyr yit no wight, Ne neuyr yit gaffe myn herte to ille So mykelle as it dothe to nyght."

"Bors," he sayd, "holde stylle, Suche wordys ar noughte to kythe, I wille wende my lady tille, Som new tythandes for to lythe; I ne shalle nought bote wet hyr wylle; loke ye make youe glad and blythe, Certenly I nelle nought dwelle, Bot come a-gayne to youe alle swythe."

For why, he wende haue comyne sone,
For to dwelle had he not thought;
Non armore he dyde hym vppon,
Bot a robe alle sengle wrought;
In hys hand a swerd he fone,
Off tresson dred he hym ryght noght,
There was no man vndyr the mone
he wende wyth harme durste hym haffe sought.

Whan he come to the lady shene, he kissid, and clypped that swete wyght, For sothe they neury wolde wene That any treson was ther dyght. So mykylle loue was hem by-twene, That they noght de-parte myght; To bede he gothe wyth the quene, And there he thoughte to dwelle alle nyght.

he was not buskyd in hys bedde,
—launcelot, in the quenys boure,—
Come Agrawayne, and syr mordreit,
Wyth twelve knyghtys stiffe in stowre;
Launcelot of tresson they be-gredde,
Callyd hym fals, and kyngys treytoure,
And he so strongly was by-stedde,
There-inne he hadde non armoure.

janis for

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<sup>&</sup>quot;Welaway," than sayd the quene,
"launcelot, what shalle worthe of vs twoo,
The loue that hathe bene vs be-twene
To such endynge that it sholde goo,

Withe Agrawayne that is so kene, That nyght and day hathe bene oure foo; Now I wote wyth-outen wene That alle oure wele is tornyd to woo."

"lady," he sayd, "thow moste blynne; Wyde I wote thes wordis bethe ryffe, Bot, is here any armoure inne, That I may haue to saue my lyffe?" "Certis, nay," she sayd thenne, "Thys antoure is so wondyr stryffe, That I ne may to none armoure wynne, Helme, ne hauberke, swerd ne knyffe."

Euyr Agrawayne, and syr mordred, Callyd hym "Recreante fals knyght," Bad hym ryse oute of hys bedde, For he moste nedis wyth them fyght. In hys robe than he hym cled, Thoughe he none armoure gete myght, Wrothely oute hys swerd he gredde, The chamber dore he sette vp ryght;

An armyd knyght be-fore in wente, And wende launcelot wele to sloo, Bot launcelot gaffe hym soche a dynte, That to the grounde gonne he go: The other alle agayne than stente, Aftyr hym dorste folowe no moo.

To the chambyr dore he sprente, And claspid it wyth barres twoo:

The knyght that launcelot has slayne, Hys armoure founde he fayre and bryght, Hastely he hathe hem of drayne, And therin hym selfe dight: "Now, know thou wele, syr Agrawayne. Thow presons me no more to nyght," Oute than sprange he wyth mykelle mayn, Hym selfe a-yenste hem alle to fyght.

Launcelot than smote wyth herte goode, Wete ye welle, wyth-outen lese, Syr Agrawayne to dethe yode, And sythen alle the other presse; Was non so stronge that hym wyth-stode Be he had made a lytelle rese; Bot mordreit fled as he were wode, To saue hys lyff fulle fayne he was.

LAUNCELOT to hys chambre yode, to bors, and to hys other knyghtis;
Bors armyd be-fore hym stode,
To bedde yit was he nogt dight;
The knyghtis for fere was nye wode,
So were they drechyd alle that nyght,
Bot blythe wexid they in her mode,
Whan they her mastyr sawghe wyth syght:

"Syr," sayd bors the hardy knyght,
"Aftyr you haue we thoght fulle longe,
To bedde durste I me nogt dight,
For drede ye hade some aunter stronge;
Owre knyghtis haue be drechyd to nyght,
That som nakyd oute of bed spronge,
For-thy we were fulle sore afryght
Leste som treson were vs a-monge."

"Ya, bors, drede the no wight,
Bot bethe of herte good and bolde,
And swythe a-waken vp alle my knyghtis,
And loke whiche wille wyth vs holde;
Loke they be armyd and redy dight,
For it is sothe that thou me tolde,
We haue be-gonne thys ilke nyght
That shalle brynge many a man fulle colde."

Bors than spake wyth drery mode, "Syr," he sayd, "sithe it is so, We shalle be of hertis good, Aftyr the wele to take the wo."

The knyghtis sprent as they were wode, And to there harneise gon the go; At the morow, armyd be-fore hym stode An hundrethe knyghtis and squyers mo.

Whan they were armyd, and redy dight, A softe pas forthe gonne they ride, As men that were of mykelle myght, To a forest there be-syde. launcelot arrayes alle hys knyghtis, And there they loggen hem to byde, Tylle they herd of the lady bryght, What auntere of hyr shulde be-tyde.

Mordreit than toke a way fulle gayne, And to the forest wente he right, Hys auntures tolde, for sothe to sayne, That were by-fallyn that ylke nyght. "Mordreit, have ye that treitour slayne, Or, how haue ye wyth hym dight?" "Nay, syr, bot dede is aggrawayne, And so ar alle oure other knyghtis."

Whan it herde syr gawayne,
That was so hardy knyght and bolde,
"Allas, is my brother slayne!"
Sore hys herte be-gan to colde;
"I warnyd wele syr Aggrawayne,
Or euyr yit thys tale was tolde,
Launcelot was so myche of mayne,
A-yenste hym was stronge to holde."

It was no lenger for to byde:— Kynge, and alle his knyghtis kene, Toke there counselle in that tyde, What was beste do wyth the quene. It was no lenger for to byde, That day fo[r-] brent shuld she bene.

The fyre than made they in the felde, There-to they brought that lady fre, Alle that euyr myght wepene welde, A-boute her armyd for to bee. Gawayne, that styffe was vndir shelde, Gaheryet, ne gaheryes, ne wold nogt see, In there chamber they hem helde, Off hyr they had grete pyte.

The kynge Arthure, that ylke tyde, Gawayne and gaherys for sent, here answeres were nogt for to hyde, "They ne wolde nogt be of hys assente;" "Gawayne wolde neuyr be nere by-syde There any woman shuld be brente." Gaheriet, and gaheries, wyth lytelle pryde Alle vn-armyd thedyr they wente.

A squeer gonne tho tythandes lythe,
That launcelot to courte had sente,
To the foreste he wente as swithe
There launcelote and hys folke was lente.
Bad hem "come and haste blythe;
The quene is ledde to be brente."
And they to hors and armes swythe,
And iche one be-fore other sprente.

The quene by the fyre stode, And in hyr smoke alle redy was; lordyngis was there many and good, And grete power wyth-outen lese. Launcelote sprente as he were wode; Fulle sone partyd he the prees, Was none so styffe a-geynste hym stode, Be he had made a lytelle rese,

There was no stele stode hem a-geyne; Though faught they but a lytelle stound, lordyngys that were myche of mayne, Many goode were brought to grounde; Gaheriet and gaheries bothe were slayne Wythe many a doulfulle dethes wounde; The quene thay toke wyth-oute layne And to the foreste gonne they founde.

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THE tythingis is to the kynge brought, how "launcelote has tane away the quene, Suche wo as there is wroughte, Slayne ar alle oure knyghtis kene." Downe he felle, and swounyd ofte, Grete duelle it was to here and sene, So nere hys herte the sorowe sought, Alle-moste hys lyffe, wolde no man wene;

"Ihesu cryste, what may I sayne? In erthe was neuyr man so wo! Suche knyghtys as there ar slayne In alle thys worlde there is no mo; Lette no man telle Syr gawayne Gaheriet hys brother is dede hym fro; But, weilaway, the reufulle rayne That euyr launcelote was my fo."

Gawayne gonne in hys chambyr hym holde, Off alle the day he nolde not oute goo; A squyer than the tythandys tolde,—What wondyr theighe hys herte were wo: "Allas," he sayde, "my brother bolde; Where gahereit be dede me fro!" So sore hys hert be-gan to colde, Alle-moste he wolde hym selff sloo.

The squyer spake wyth drery mode, To re-comfort syr Gawayne, "Gaheriet eyles noght but goode, he wolle sone come a-gayne."

Gawayne sprent as he were wode
To the chambre there they lay slayne:
The chambre flore alle ranne on blode,
And clothys of golde were ouer hem drayne.

A clothe he heuys than vppon hyght, What wondyr thoughe hys hert were sore So dulfully to se them dight, That ere so doughty knyghtis were. Whan he hys brother sawghe wyth syght, A word myght he speke no more; There he loste mayne and myght, And ouyr hym felle in swounynge thore.

Off swounynge whan he myght a-wake The hardy knyght syr gawayne, Be god he sware, and loude spake, As man that myche was of mayne, "Be-twixte me and launcelote du lake, Nys man in erthe, for sothe to sayne, Shalle trewes sette, and pees make, Er outher of vs haue other slayne."

A squyer that launcelot to court hadde sente, Off the tythandys gonne he lythe,
To the foreste is he wente,
And tolde launcelot also swythe
how "lordy[n]ges that were riche of rente,
Fele goode had loste hyr lyffe,
Gaheryet and gaheries sought here ende."
Bot than was launcelot no thynge blythe,

"Lord," he said, "what may thys bene, Ihesu cryste, what may I sayne,
The loue that hathe be-twexte vs bene,
That euyr gaheryet me was a-gayne;
Now, I wote for alle by-dene
A sorye man is syr gawayne;
A-cordement thar me nevyr wene,
Tille eyther of vs haue other slayne."

launcelot gonne wyth hysse folke forthe wende Withe sory hert and drery mode;
To quenys, and countesses fele he sende,
And grete ladyes of gentille blode,
That he had ofte here landis deffende,
And foughten whan hem nede by-stode;—
Ichone her power hym lende,
And made hys party stiffe and goode;

quenys and countesses that ryche were, Sende hym erlys wyth grete meyne, Other ladies, that myght no more, Sente hym barons or knyghtis free; So mykelle folke to hym gon fare, Hydous it was hys oste to see. To the Ioyus gard wente he thare, And helde hym in that stronge cyte.

LAUNCELOTIS herte was fulle sore
For the lady fayre and bryght;
A damosselle he dyd be yare,—
In ryche apparayle was she dyght,—
Hastely in message for to fare
To the kynge of mykelle myght,
To prove it fals,—what myght he mare,—
Bot proferys hym there-fore to fyght.

The mayden is redy for to ryde In a fulle ryche aparaylmente Off samytte grene, wyth mykylle pryde, That wroght was in the oryente. A dwerffe shulde wende by hyr syde, Suche was launcelotis comaundemente; So were the manerys in that tyde Whan a mayde on message wente.

To the castelle whan she come, In the paleise gonne she lyght, To the kynge hyr erande she sayd sone,— By hym satte syr gawayne the knyght,— Sayd, "that lyes were sayde hym vppon; Trewe they were by day and nyght; To prove it as a knyght shulde done, Launcelot proferis hym to fyghte."

The kynge Arthure spekys thore Wordys that were kene and thro, "He ne myght proue it neuer more, Bot of my men that he wold slo;

Be Ihesu cryste," the kynge sware, And Syr gawayne than also, "his dedis shalle be bought fulle sore, Bot yife no stele nylle in hym go."

The mayden hathe hyr answere;
To the Ioyus garde gonne she ryde;
Suche as the kynges wordis were,
She tolde launcelot in that tyde.
Launcelot syghed wounder sore,
Teres frome hys ygen ganne glyde,
Bore de gawnes by gode than sware,
"In mydde the felde we shalle hem byde."

Arthure wolde no lenger a-byde,
Bot hastis hym wyth alle hys myght,
Messengeres dyd he go and ryde,
That thay ne shulde lette for day ne nyght,
Thorow-oute yngland by iche a syde,
To erle, baroun, and to knyght,
Bad hem come that ilke tyde,
Withe hors stronge and armure bryght.

Thoughe the knyght that were dede hem fro, There-of was alle there mykelle kare, Thre hundrethe thay made mo, Oute of the castelle or they wold fare, Off ynglonde, a[nd] yreland also, Off walys, and scottis that beste were, Launcelot and hys folkys to slo, Withe hertis breme as any bore.

Whan thys oste was alle bowne,
It was no lenger for to byde,
Rayses spere, and gounfanoune,
As men that were of mykelle pryde;
Wyth helme, and shelde, and hauberke browne,
Gawayne hym-selfe be-fore ganne ryde
To the Ioyus garde, that ryche towne,
And sette a sege on iche a syde.

A-boute the Ioyus garde they laye Seuentene wokys, and welle mare, Tille it felle vppon a day launcelot home bad hem fare, "Breke youre sege! wendys awaye! you to slae grete pyte it ware," he sayd, "allas, and weilawaye, That euyr be-ganne thys sorewe sare."

Evir the kynge, and Syr gawayne, Calde hym "fals recreante knyght," And sayde, "he had hys bretherne slayne, And treytour was by day and nyght; Bad hym come and prove hys mayne In the felde wyth hem to fyghte:" Launcelot sighed; for sothe to sayne, Grete duelle it was to se wyth sight.

So loude they launcelot gonne ascrye With vois and hydous hornys bere, Bors de gawnes standis hym by, And launcelot makys yuelle chere, "Syr," he sayd, "whare-fore and why Shulde we these proude wordys here? me thynke ye fare as cowardlye As we ne durste no man nyghe nere;

Dight we vs in ryche araye,
Bothe wyth spere, and wyth shelde,
As swithe as euyr that we maye,
And ryde we oute in-to the felde;
Whyle my lyffe laste maye,
Thys day I ne shalle my wepen yelde;
There-fore my lyffe I darre wele laye,
We two shalle make hem alle to helde."

"Allas," quod launcelot, "wo is me, That euyr shuld I se wyth syghte, A-geyne my lord[e] for to be, The noble kynge that made me knyght." "Syr gawayne, I be-seche the As thou arte man of myche myght, In the felde let not my lorde be, Ne that thy selfe wyth me not fyghte."

It may no lenger for to byde, But buskyd hem, and made alle bowne; Whan thay were redy for to ryde, They reysed spere and gonfanoune.

Whan these ostes gan samen glyde Withe vois and hydous hornys sowne, Grete pyte was on eyther syde, So fele goode ther were layd downe.

Syr lyonelle wyth myche mayne Withe a spere by-fore gan founde; Syr gawayne rydys hym a-gayne, hors and man he bare to grounde That alle men wende he had ben slayne; Syr lyonelle hade suche a wounde, Oute of the felde was he drayne, For he was seke and sore vu-sounde.

In alle the felde that ilke tyde Myght no man stonde launcelot a-geyne, And sythen as faste as he myght ryde To saue that no man sholde be slayne. The kynge was euyr nere be-syde, And hewe on hym wyth alle hys mayne, And he so corteise was that tyde, O dynte that he nolde smyte agayne.

Bors de gawnes saughe at laste, And to the kynge than gan he ryde, And on hys helme he hytte so faste, That nere he loste alle hys pryde; The stede rigge vndyr hym braste, That he to grounde felle that tyde, And sythen, wordys loude he caste Withe Syr launcelot to chyde: "Syr, shalthou alle day suffer so That the kynge shalle the assayle? And sethe, hys herte is so thro, Thy corteise may not availe. Batailles shalle there neuere be mo, And thou wilt do be my consalle, Geuyth vs leue them alle to slo, For thou haste venquesshid thys bataille."

"Allas," quod launcelot, "wo is me,
That euyr shulde I se wyth syghte
By-fore me hym vnhorsyd bee,
The noble kynge that made me knyght."
he was than so corteise and fre,
That downe of hys stede he lyghte;
The kynge ther-on than horsys he,
And bade hym fle yiffe that he myght.

Whan the kynge was horsyd there, launcelot lokys he vppon,
How corteise was in hym more
Then euyr was in any man.
He thought on thyngis that had bene ore,
The teres from hys ygen ranne,
He sayde, "allas," wyth syghynge sore,
"That euyr yit thys werre be-gan."

The parties arne wyth-drawen a-waye, Off knyghtis were they wexyn thynne, On morow on that other daye Scholde the bataylle efte be-gynne. Thay dyght hem on a ryche araye, And partyd ther ostes bothe in twynne; he that by-ganne thys wrechyd playe, What wondyr thoughe he had grete synne

Bors was breme as any bore, And oute he rode to syr gawayne, For lyonelle was woundyd sore; Wenge hys brother he wolde fulle fayne. Syr gawayne gonne a-geyne hym fare, As man that myche was of mayne, Eyther throughe other body bare, That welle nere were they bothe slayne;

Bothe to grounde they felle in fere, There-fore were fele folke fulle woo; The kynges party redy were A-way to take hem bothe two. launcelot hym selfe come nere, Bors rescous he them froo, Oute of the felde men hym bere, So were they woundyd bothe two.

Off thys bataille were to telle A man that it wele vndyrstode, How knightis vndyr sadels felle, And sytten downe wyth sory mode; Stedys that were bolde and snelle, A-monge hem waden in the blode, Bot by the tyme of euyn belle Launcelot party the better stode.

Off thys batayle was no more,
Bot thus depa[r]ten they that daye,
Folke here frendys home ledde and bare
That slayne in the feldys laye.
Launcelot gonne to hys castelle fare,
The bataille venquesshyd, for sothe to saye;
There was duelle and wepynge sare,
Amonge hem was no chyldys playe.

[Into] alle landys northe and southe Off thys werre the word spronge, And yit at Rome it was fulle couthe In ynglande was suche sorowe stronge; There-of the pope had grete routhe, A lettre he selid wyth hys hande, "Bot they accorded welle in trowthe, Enterdite he wolde the lande."

1 : Gidue ?

Then was a bischope at Rome Off Rowchester, wyth-outen lese; Tylle ynglande he the message come, To karllylle ther the kynge was. The popis lettre oute he nome In the paleis by-fore the desse, And bade them do the popis dome, And holde yngland in reste and pes:

Redde was it by-fore alle by-dene,
The lettre that the pope gonne make,
"How he moste haue a-geyne the quene,
And a-corde withe launcelot du lake;
Make a pes hem by-twene
For euyr more, and trews make,
Or ynglande entyrdyted shulde bene,
And torne to sorow for ther sake."

The kynge a-geyne it wolde nogte bene
To do the popys comaundemente,
Blythely a-yeyne to haue the quene;
Wolde he noght that ynglonde were shente;
Bot gawayne was of herte so kene,
That to hym wolde he neuyr assente
To make a-corde hem by-twene,
While any lyffe were in hym lente.

Through the sente of alle by-dene, Ganne the kynge a lettre make, The bysschope in message yede by-twene To syr launcelot du lake, And askyd, "yiffe he wolde the quene Cortessly to hym by-take, Or yngland enterdyt shuld bene, And torne to sorow for ther sake."

launcelot answeryd, wyth grete fauoure, As knyght that hardy was and kene, "Syr, I haue stande in many a stoure Bothe for the kynge and for the quene; Fulle colde had bene hys beste towre, Yiff that I nadde my selfe bene. he quytes it me wyth lytelle honoure, That I haue seruyd hym alle by-dene."

The bysschope spake wyth-oute fayle,
Thoughe he were nothynge a-froughte,
"Syr, thynke that ge haue venquysshid many a bataille
Throwgh grace that god hathe for you wrought;
ye shalle do now by my counsayle,
Thynke on hym that you dere bought,
Wemen ar frele of hyr entayle,
Syr, lettes not ynglande go to noght."

"Syr bysshope, castelles for to holde, Wete you wele I haue no nede, I myght be kynge yif that I wolde Off alle benwike, that ryche thede; Ryde in to my landys bolde Withe my knyghtes styffe on stede; The quene, yif that I to them yolde, Off hyr lyffe I haue grette drede."

"Syr, be mary that is mayden floure, And god that alle shalle rede and ryght, She ne shalle haue no dyshonoure, There-to my trouthe I shalle you plyght; Bot boldely brought in-to hyr boure, To ladyes, and to maydens bryght, And holden in welle more honoure Than euyr she was by day or nyght."

"Now, yif I grande suche a thynge, That I delyuere shalle the quene, Syr bysshope, say, my lorde the kynge, Syr gawayne, and hem alle by-dene, That thay shalle make me a sekerynge, A trews to holde vs by-twene."

Then was the bysshope woundyr blythe That launcelot gaffe hym thys answere;

Tylle hys palfray he wente as swythe, And tylle karllylle gonne he fare. Tythandys sone were done to lythe Whiche that launcelotis wordis ware; The kynge and courte was alle fulle blythe, A trews they sette and sekeryd thare;

Through the assent of alle by-dene A syker trews there they wrought, Though gawayne were of hert[e] kene There a-yenste was he nogte, To hald a trews hem by-twene While launcelot the quene home broght; Bot ouermente thar hym nevyr wene Or eyther other herte haue sought.

A syker trews gonne they make, And wyth ther seales they it bande: There-to they thre bisshopys gon take, The wiseste that were in alle the lande, And sent to launcelot du lake. At Ioyus gard the they hym fande: The lettres there they hym by-take, And there-to launcelot held hys hande.

The bisshopis than wente on her way To karlylle, there the kynge wase, "Launcelot shall come that other day Withe the lady proude in pres." he dight hym i a riche araye, Wete ye wele, wyth-outen les, An hundreth knyghtis, for sothe to saye, The beste of alle hys oste [he] chese.

Launcelot and the quene were cledde
In robes of a riche wede,
Off samyte white wyth syluer shredde,
yuory sadylle, and white stede;
Saumbues of the same threde,
That wroght was in the heythen thede;
launcelot hyr brydelle ledde,—
In the Romans, as we rede;—

The other knyghtis euerychone
In Samyte grene of heythen lande,
And in there kyrtelles ryde allone,
And iche knyght a grene garlande,
Sadillis sette wyth ryche stone,
Ichone a braunche of olyffe in hande;
Alle the felde a-boute hem schone,
The knightis rode fulle loude synghand.

To the castelle when they come, In the paleise gonne they lyghte, launcelot the quene of hyr palfray nome, They seyde it was a semly syghte. The kynge than salowes he fulle sone, As man that was of myche myghte; Feyre wordys were there fone, Bot wepynge stode there many a knyghte.

Launcelot spake, as I you mene,
To the kynge of mykelle myght,
"Syr, I haue the broght thy quene,
And sauyd her lyffe wyth the ryght,
As lady that is feyre and shene
And trewe is bothe day and nyght;
Iffe any man sayes she is noght clene,
I profre me there-fore to feyght."

The kynge Arthur answerys thore Wordys that were kene and throo, "Launcelot, I ne wende neuyr more That thow wolde me haue wroght thys woo, So dere as we samen were, There-vndyr that thou was my foo; Bot noght for-thy, me rewis sore That euyr was werre by-twexte vs two."

LAUNCELOT, than answeryde he Whan he had lystenyd longe, "Syr, thy wo thow witeste me, And welle thou woste it is wyth wronge;

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I was neuyr fer frome the, When thow had any sorow stronge, Bot lyers lystenes thow to lye, Off whome alle thys word oute spronge."

Than by-spake hym Syr gawayne
That was hardy knyght and free,
"launcelot, thou may it noght wyth-sayne,
That thow haste slayne my brethrene thre;
For-thy, schalle we proue oure mayne,
In feld whether shalle haue the gree;
Or eyther of vs shalle other slayne,
Blythe shalle I neuyr be."

Launcelot answeryd wyth hert sore,
Thoughe he were nothynge a-froughte,
"Gawayne," he said, "thoughe I were there,
My self thy brethren slow I noght;
Other knyghtis fele ther were,
That sythen thys werre dere han bought."
launcelot syghed wonder sore,
The terys of hys yen sowght.

launcelot spake, as I you mene,
To the kynge, and syr gawayne,
"Syr, shalle I neuyr of cordemente wene,
That we myght frendys be ageyne?"
Gawayne spake wyth hert[e] kene,
As man that myche was of mayne,
"Nay, cordement thar the neuyr wene,
Tylle on of vs haue other slayne."

"Sythe it neuyr may be-tyde
That pees may be vs by-twene,
May I in to my landys ryde,
Saffely wyth my knyghtis kene?
Than wille I here no lenger byde
Bot take leue of yow alle bydene;
Where I wende in world[e] wyde
Engelond wolle I neuyr sene."

The kynge arthur answered thore,
The terys from hys ygen ranne,
"By Ihesu cryste," he there swore,
"That alle thys worlde wroght and wan,
In-to thy landys whan thou willt fare,
The shalle lette no lyuand man."
He sayd, "Allas," withe syghynge sare,
"That euyr yit thys werre by-ganne.

Sythe that I shalle wende a-waye, And in myn awne landys wone, May I saffly wone ther aye That ye wythe werre not come me on?" Syr gawayne than sayd, "naye, By hym that made sonne and mone, Dight the as welle as euyr thou may, For we shalle after come fulle sone."

launcelot hys leue hathe taken thare, It was no lenge[r] for to byde, Hys palfray found he redy gare, Made hym redy for to ryde; Oute of the castelle gonne they fare, Gremly teres lette they glyde, There was dwelle and wepynge sare, At the partynge was lytelle pryde.

To the Ioyus gard, the ryche towne, Rode launcelot the noble knyghte, Busked hem, and made a bowne, As men that were of myche myght; Withe spere in hand, and gonfanowne, Lette they nouther day ne nyght, To an hauen hight "kelyon," Ryche galleys there they fande dyght.

Now ar thay shyppyd on the flode, launcelot and hys knyghtis hende; Wederes had they feyre and goode, Wher hyr wille was for to wende,

To an hauen there it stode As men were leueste for to lende; Off benwike blythe was hyr mode, Whan Ihesu cryst hem thedir sende.

Now ar thay aryued on the stronde, Off hem was fele folke fulle blythe, Grete lordis of the lande
A-geyne hym they come as swythe, And fellyn hym to fote and hande,
For her lord thay gonne hym kythe, At hys domys for to stande,
And at hys lawes for to lythe.

Bors made he kynge of gawnes,
As it was bothe law and ryght;
lyonelle made kynge of fraunce,
Be olde tyme "gawle" hyghte;
Alle hys folke he ganne auance,
And landys gaffe to iche a knyghte,
And storyd hys castellys for alle chance,
For mykylle he hopyd more to fyght.

Estor he crownys wyth hys hande,— So sayes the boke, wyth-outen lese, made hym kynge of hys fadyr lande, And prynce of all the ryche prese; Bad no thynge hym shulde wyth-stande, Bot hald hym kynge as worthy was, For ther more hym self wold fande Tylle he wiste to leffe in pes.

ARTHUR wolle he no lenger a-byde, nyght and day hys herte was sore, messengerys did he go and ryde Throughe-oute yngland for to fare To erlys, and barons, on iche a syde, Bad hem "buske and make alle gare, On launcelot landys for to ryde, To brenne and sle and make alle bare."

At hys knyghtis alle by-dene,
The kynge gan hys conselle take,
And bad hem ordeyne hem by-twene
Who beste steward were for to make,
The reme for to saue and geme,
And beste were for bretaynes sake;
Fulle mykelle they dred hem alle by-dene
That alyens the land wold take.

The knyghtis answeryd, wyth-oute lese, And said, for sothe, that "so them thought That syr mordred the sekereste was,— Thoughe men the reme throw-oute sought,— To saue the reme in trews and pees." Was a boke by-fore hym brought; Syr mordreit they to steward chese, That many a bolde sythen a-bought.

It was no lenger for to byde, But buskes hem, and made alle bowne; Whan they were redy for to ryde, They reised spere and gonfanowne. Forthe they went, wyth mykelle pryde, Tylle an hauyne hyght "kerlyonne," And graythes be the lande syde, Galeis grete of fele fasowne.

now ar they shippid on the see, And wendyn ouyr the water wyde; Off benwyke whan they myght se, Withe grete route they gonne vp ryde; wyth-stode hem neyther stone ne tre, Bot brente and slow on iche a syde.

launcelot is in hys beste cyte, There he batelle wolle a-byde.

launcelot clepis hys knyghtis kene, His erlys, and hys barons bolde, Bad hem ordeyne hem by-twene To wete her wylle, what they wolde, "To ryde a-geyne hem alle by-dene, Or ther worthe walles holde; For welle they wiste wyth-outen wene, For no fantyse Arthur nold folde."

Bors de gawnes, the noble knyght, stornnely spekys in that stounde, "Doughty men that ye be dyghte, Foundis your worship for to fownd, Withe spere and shelde and armes bryght A-geyne your fo-men for to fownd; kynge, and duke, erle, and knyght, We shalle hem bete and brynge to grounde."

Lyonelle spekys in that tyde,
That was of warre wyse and bolde,
"Lordyngis, yit I rede we byde,
And oure worthy walles holde;
Le[t] them pryke wyth alle ther pryde,
Tylle they haue caught bothe hungre and colde,
Than shalle we oute vppon them ryde,
And shredde them downe as shepe in folde."

Syr baundemorgew, that bolde kynge, To launcelot spekys in that tyde, "Syr, cortessye and youre sufferynge Has wakend vs wo fulle wyde; Awise you welle vppon thys thynge, Yiff that they ouer oure landys ryde, Alle to noght they myght vs brynge Whyle we in holys here vs hyde."

Galyhud, that ay was goode,
To launcelot he spekys thare,
"Syr, here ar knyghtis of kynges blode,
That longe wylle not droupe and dare;
Gyffe me leue, for crosse on rode
Withe my men to them to fare,
Thoughe they be wers than outlawes wode,
I shalle them sle and make fulle bare."

Off northe gales were bretherne seuen, Ferly mekelle of streng[t]he and pryde, Not fulle fele that men coude neuyne Better dorste in bataile byde; Alle they sayd wyth one steuen, "Lordyngis, how longe wolle ye chyde? Launcelot, for goddys loue in heuen, Vyth galehud forthe lette vs ryde."

Than spake the lord that was so hende, Hym self syr launcelot de lake, "Lordyngis, a whyle I rede we lende, And oure worthy wallys wake; A message wille I to them sende, A trews be-twene vs for to take; my lord is so corteise and hende That yit I hope a pees to make;

Thoughe we myght the worshyppe wynne, Off a thynge myn hert is sore,
Thys land is of folke fulle thynne,
Bataylles has it made fulle bare;
Wete ye welle it were grete synne
Crysten folke to sle thus more,
Withe myldenesse we shalle be-gynne,
And god shalle wische vs wele to fare."

And at thys assent alle they ware, And sette a wacche for to wake, knyght breme as any bare, And derfe of drede as is the drake.

A damyselle thay dede be gare, And hastely gon her lettres make, A mayde sholde on the message fare, A trews by-twene them for to take.

The mayde was fulle shene to shewe, Vppon her stede whan she was sette, Hyr paraylle alle of one hewe, Off a grene weluette;

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In hyr hand a braunche newe; For why, that no man sholde her lette; Ther-by men messangerys knewe In ostes whan that men them mette.

The kynge was lokyd in a felde By a ryuer brode and dreghe, A while she houyd, and by-helde Pavylons were pyghte on hyghe. She saughe there many comly telde Wythe pomelles bryghte as goldis beghe, On one hynge the kyngis shelde; That pauylon she drew hyr nyghe.

The kynges baner oute was sette, That pauylon she drewe hyr nere, Wyth a knyght fulle sone she mette, hyght "Syr lucan de bottellere." She hailsed hym, and he her grette, The mayde wyth full mylde chere, Hyr erande was not for to lette, he wiste she was a messengere.

Syr lucan downe gan hyr take, And in hys armes forthe gan lede, hendely to her he spake, As knyght that wise was vndyr wede; "Thou comeste from launcelot de lake," The beste that euyr strode on stede, Ihesu, for hys modyris sake, Yiffe the grace wele to spede."

Feyre was pight vppon a playne
The paviloun in ryche a-parayle,
The kynge hym selfe, and syr gawayne,
Comely sytten in the halle;
The mayde knelyd the kynge a-gayne,
So lowe to grounde gan she falle,
here lettres were not for to layne,
They were i-rade amonge hem alle.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The original reads Ihc. for Jesus Christ.

hendly and feyre the mayden spake, Fulle fayne of speche she wold be sped, "Syr, god you saue from wo and wrake, And alle your knyghtis in ryche wede; Yow gretis wele, syr launcelot du lake, That wyth yow hathe bene euyr at nede, A xij monthe trewse he wolde take To lyue vppon hys owne lede;

And sythen, yiffe ye make an heste, he wille it holde wyth hys honde, By-twene you for to make pees Stabully ouer for to stonde:

He wolle rape hym on a resse Myldely to the holy londe,
There to lyue, wyth-outen lese,
Whyle he is man lyvande."

The kynge than clepid hys counsayle, Hys dougty knyghtis alle by-dene, "Fyrste," he sayde, "wyth-outen fayle, Me thynke it were beste to sene; he were a fole, wyth-outen fayle, So feyr forwardys for to fleme:" The kynge the messyngere thus dyd assayle, "It were pite to sette warre vs by-twene."

"Sertis nay," sayd syr gawayne,
"he hathe wroght me wo i-noughe.
So traytourly he hathe my bredren slayne,
Alle for your loue, sir, that is treuthe:
To yngland wille I not torne a-gayne
Tylle he be hangid on a boughe;
Whyle me lastethe myght or mayne
There-to I shalle fynd peple i-noghe."

The kynge hym self wyth-owten lese, And iche a lord,—is nought to layne,— Alle they spake to haue pese, But hym self syr gawayne;

To batayle hathe he made hys hest, Or ellys neuer to torne a-gayne. They made hem redy to that rese, There-fore was fele folke vnfayne.

The kynge is comyn in-to the halle, And in hys royalle see hym sette, He made a knyght the mayden calle, Syr lucane de botteler, wyth-outen lette: "Say to launcelot, and hys knyghtis alle, suche an heste I haue him hette, That we shalle wend for no walle, Tyll we wyth myghtis onys haue mette."

The mayde had hyr answere; Withe drery hert she gan hyr dyght, hyr feyr palfray fande she yare, And Syr lucan ledde her thedyr ryght. So throw a foreste gan she fare, And hasted her wyth alle hyr myght There launcelot and hys knyghtis were, In benwyk the browgh wyth bemys bryght.

Now is she went wyth-in the walle The worthy damysselle fayre in wede; Hendely she cam in to that halle, A knyght hyr toke downe of hyre stede. A-monge the pryncis proude in palle She toke hyr lettres for to rede; There was no counsayle for to calle, But redely buskis them to that dede,

As folkys that preste were to feight Frome feld wold they neuyr fle: But by the morow that day was lyght, A-boute by-segyd was alle there fee; ychone theyne rayed in alle ryghtis Novther party thought to flee.

Erly as the day gan sprynge
The trompettis vppon the wallis went;

There myght they se a wondyr thynge Off teldys riche, and ma[n]y a tente. Syr arthur than, the comely kynge, wyth hys folkis there was lente To yeff assaute, wyth-oute lesyng, wyth alblasters and bowes bente.

Launcelot alle for-wondred was Off the folke by-fore the walle; But he had rather knowen that rease, Oute had ronne hys knyghtis alle; he sayd, "pryncis, bethe in pease, For folyse fele that myght by-falle, yiff thay wille not ther sege sease, Fulle sore I hope for-thynke hem shalle."

Than gawayne, that was good at euery nede, Graythid hym in hys gode armour, And styffly sterte vppon a stede, That syker was in ylke a stoure; Forthe he sprange, as sparke on glede, By-fore the yates a-gayne the toure, he bad a knyght come kythe mayne, A cours of werre for hys honoure.

Bors de gawnes buskys hym bowne Vpon a stede that shulde hym bere, Wyth helme, sheld, and hauberke browne, And in hys hand a fulle good spere; Owte he rode a grete randowne,—Gawayn kyd he covde of werre,—hors, and man, bothe bare he downe, Suche a dynte he yaffe hym there.

Syr lyonelle was alle redy than, And for hys broder was wonder woo, Redely wyth hys stede oute ranne, And wende gawayne for to sloo; Gawayn hym kepte as he wele can, As he that ay was kene and thro; Downe he bare bothe hors and man, And euery day som seruyd he soo.

And so more than halfe a yere, As longe as they there layne, Euery day men myght se there Men woundyd, and som slayne. But how that euer in world it were, Suche grace had sir gawayne, Euer he passyd hole and clere, There myght no man stand hym agayne.

Than it by-felle vponn a tyde, Syr gawayne, that was hende and free, He made hym redy for to ryde By-fore the gatis of the cyte; Launcelot of treson he be-cryed, "That he had slayne hys bretherne thre, That launcelot mygte no lenger a-byde But he euer a cowarde scholde be."

The lord that grete was of honoure, Hym selffe sir launcelot du lake, A-bove the gatis vppon the toure Comely to the kynge he spake, "My lord, god saue youre honoure, Me ys wo now for yowre sake, A-gaynste thy kynne to stonde in stoure, But nedys I muste thys batayle take."

Launcelot armyd hym fulle wele, For sothe had fulle grete nede, Helme, hawberke, and alle of stele, And stifely sterte vppon a stede; Hys harneyse lacked he neuer a dele, To were wantyd hym no wede, No wepyn wyth alle to dele; for-the he sprange as sparke on glede.

Than was it warnyd faste on hye How in world that it shud fare, "That no man schold come hem nye, Tylle the tone dede, or yolden ware."

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Folke wyth-drew them than bye, Vpon the feld was brode and bare, The knyghtis mette, as men it sye, how they sette there dyntis sare.

Than had syr gawayne suche a grace,—An holy man had boddyn that bone,—Whan he were in any place
There he shuld batayle done,
Hys strength shulld wex in suche a space
From the vndyr tyme tylle none;
And launcelot for-bare ay for that case,
A-gayne xx strokys he yaff not one:

Launcelot saw ther was no socoure, nedysse muste he hys venture abyde, many a dynt he gan wele in-dure, Tylle it drew nere the noon tyde; Than he straught in that stoure, And yaffe gawayne a wond[e] wyde, The blode alle coueryd hys coloure, And he felle downe vpon hys syde;

Throw the helme, in to the hede,

Was hardy gawayne woundyd so
That vnneth was hym lyfe leuyd,
On fote myght he no ferther goo;
But wightly hys swerd a-bowte he wavyd,
For euer he was bothe kene and thro;
launcelot than hym lyand levyd,
For alle the world he nold hym slo.

launcelot than hym drewhe on dryhe, hys swerd was in hys hand[e] drawen, And syr gawayne cryed lowde on hye, "Traytour, and coward, come a-gayne, Whan I am hole, and goynge on hye, Than wylle I prove wyth myght and mayne, And yit a[n] thow woldyst nyghe me nye, Thow shalt wele wete I am not slayn."

"Gawayne, while thow myghtis styfflye stonde, many a stroke to-day of the I stode, And I for-bare the in euery londe
For love and for the kyngis blode;
Whan thou arte hole in herte and hond,
I rede the torne and chaunge thy mode;
Whyle I am launcelot, and man levande,
Gode sheld me frome werkys wode.

But have good day, my lord the kynge, And your doughty knyghtis alle, Wendyth home, and leue youre werryeng; ye wynne no worshyp at thys walle. And I wold my knyghtis oute brynge, I wote fulle sore rewe it ye shalle; My lord, there-fore, thynke on suche thynge, how fele folke there-fore myght falle."

launcelot, that was moche of mayne
Boldely to hys cyte wente,
Hys good knygtis of were fayne,
And hendely hym in armys hente.
The tother party tho toke syr gawayne,
They wessche hys woundys in hys tente;
Or euer he coueryd myght or mayne,
Vnnethe was hym the lyffe lente:

A fortenyght, the sothe to saye, Fulle passynge seke, and vn-sonde, There syr Gawayne, on lechynge laye, Or he were hole alle of hys wounde.

Than it by-felle vppon a day he made hym redy for to wound, By-fore the yat he toke the way, And askyd batayle in that stownd;

<sup>&</sup>quot;Come forthe, launcelot, and prove thy mayne, Thou traytour that hast treson wroght, my thre brethern thou haste slayne, And falsly theym to ground[e] brought;

Whyle me lastethe myght, or mayne, Thys qarelle leve wylle I noght, Neipees shalle ther neuer be sayne, Or thy sydes be throw sought."

Than launcelot thoght it no thyng gode, And for these wordis he was fulle wo; A-bove the gatis than he yode, And to the kynge he sayd so; "Syr, me rewys in my mode, That gawayne is in hert so thro. Who may me wyte, for corsse on rode, Thought I hym in bataylle sloo?"

Launcelot buskyd and made hym bowne, he wille boldely the batayle a-byde Wyth helme, shelde, and hauberke browne, None better in alle thys world[e] wyde.

Wyth spere in hand, and gonfanowne, Hys noble swerd by hys syde, Oute he rode a grete randowne. Whan he was redy for to ryde,

Gawayne grypes a fulle good spere, And in he glydes glad and gay, (Launcelot kydde he coude of were,) And euyn to hym he takys the way: So stoutely they gan to-geder bere, That marvayle it was, sothe to say, Wyth dyntis sore ganne they dere, And depe wondys daltyn thay.

Whan it was nyghed nere hand none, Gawayne strenghe gan to in-crese, So bitterly he hewyd hym vppon That launcelot alle for-wery was; Than to hys swerd he grypes a-none, And sethe that gawayne wylle not sese, Suche a dynte he yaffe hym one, That many a ryche rewed that resse;

launcelot sterte forthe in that stownde, And sethe that gawayne wyll no sease, The helme that was ryche and rownde, The noble swerd[e] rove that rease: he hyt hym a-pon the olde wounde, That ouer the sadylle downe he wente, And gryfely gronyd vpon the ground, And there was good gawayne shent.

yit gawayne, swounynge there as he lay, Gryped to hym bothe swerde and sheld, "lancelot" he sayd, "sothely to saye, And by hym that alle thys worlde shalle welde, Whyle me lastethe lyffe to daye, To the me shalle I neuer yelde; But do the werste that euyr thou may, I schalle defend me in the felde."

Launcelot than full stylle stoode
As man that was moche of myght,
"Gawayne, me rewes in my mode
Men hald the so noble a knyght.
Wenystow I were so wode
A-gaynste a feble man to fyght?
I wylle not now, by crosse on rode,
Nor neuer yit dyd by day nor nyght.

But haue good day, my lord the kynge, And alle youre dougty knyghtis by-dene, Wendyth home, and leue your werrynge, For here ye shalle no worshyppe wynne; Yif I wolde my knyghtis oute brynge, I hope fulle sone it shuld be sene; but, good lord, thynke vppon a thynge, The loue that hathe be vs by-twene."

After was it monthes two, As frely folke it vndyr-stode, Or euer gawayne myght ryde, or go, Or had fote vpon erthe to stonde. The thirde tyme he was fulle thro To do batayle wyth herte and hande, But than was word comen hem to That they muste home to yngland.

Suche mesage was hem brought,
There was no man that thought it goode,
The kynge hym-selfe fulle sone it thought,
Fulle moche mornyd he in hys mode
That suche treson in ynglond shuld be wroght,
That he moste nedys ouer the flode.

They brake sege, and homward sought, And after they had moche angry mode.

That fals traytour, sir mordreid,—
The kynges soster sone he was,
And eke hys owne sonne, as I rede,
There-fore men hym fo[r] steward chase,—
So falsely hathe he yngland ledde,
Wete you wele, wyth-outen lese,
Hys eme-is wyffe wolde he wedde,
That many a man rewyd that rease.

Festys made he, many and fele,
And grete yiftys he yafe also;
They sayd, "wyth hym was ioye and wele,
And in Arthurs tyme but sorow and woo."
And thus gan ryght to wronge goo,
All the concelle,—is noght to hele,—
Thus it was, wyth-outen moo,
To hold mordred in londe wyth wele.

False lettres he made be wroght, And causyd messangers hem to brynge, That Arthur was to grownde broght, And chese they muste a-nother kynge: Alle thay sayd, as hem thought, "Arthur louyd noght but warynge, And suche thynge as hym selfe soght, Ryght so he toke hys endynge."

mordred let crye a parlement,
The peple gan thedyr to come,
And holly throwe there assente
They made mordred kynge wyth crowne,
At canturbery, ferre in kente,
A fourtenyght held the feste in towne,
And after that to Wynchester he wente,
A ryche brydale he lette make bowne,

In somyr, whan it was fayr and bryght; Hys faders wyfe than wold he wedde, And hyr hold, wyth mayne and myght, And so hyr brynge, as byrd to bedde. Sche prayd hym of leue a fourtenyght; The lady was fulle hard be-stad, So to london sche hyr dyght, That she and hyr maydens myght be cledd.

The quene, whyte as lyly floure, Wyth knyghtis fele of her kynne, She went to london to the towre, And speryd the gates, and dwellyd ther-in. Mordred changed than hys coloure, Thedyr he went, and wold not blynne, There-to he made many a shoure, But the wallys myght he neuer wynne.

The Archebysshop of canterbery thedyr yode, And hys crosse by-fore hym broght, he sayd, "syr, for cryste on rode, What haue ye now alle in your thoght? Thy faders wyffe, wether thou be wood, To wedd her now mayste thou noght. Come Arthur euyr ouer the flood, Thow mayste be bold it wylle be boght."

"A nyse clerke," than mordred sayd,
"Trowiste thow to warne me of my wille?
be hym that for vs suffred payne,
These wordys shalt thou lyke fulle ylle;

wyth wilde hors thou shalt be drayne, And hangyd hye vpon an hylle." The bischoppe to fle than was fayne, And suffred hym hys folyes to fulfylle;

Than he hym cursyd wyth boke and belle At caunterbery, ferre in kente.

Sone whan mordred herd ther-of telle, To seche the bisschoppe hathe he sent: The bysshop durste no lenger dwelle, But gold and syluer he hathe hent; There was no lenger for to spelle, But to a wyldernesse he is went;

The worldys wele ther he wylle for-sake; Off ioye kepeth he neuer more, But a chapelle he lette make By-twene two hye holtys hore; There-in weryd he the clothys blake, In wode as he an ermyte ware; Often gan he wepe and wake For yngland, that had suche sorowis sare.

Mordred had than lyen fulle longe, But the towre myght he neuer wynne Wyth strength[e], ne wyth stoure stronge, ne wyth none other kynnes gynne. Hys fader dred he euyr a-monge, There-fore hys bale he nylle not blynne, He went to warne hem alle wyth wronge, The kyngdome that he was crownyd inne:

Forthe to Dover than gan he ryde,—All the costys wele he kende,—To erlys, and to barons, on ylk a syde, Grete yiftis he yaffe, and lettres send, And for-sette the see on ylke a syde Wyth bold[e] men, and bowes bente; Fro yngland that is brode and wyde, hys owne fader he wold deffend.

Arthur, that was mykelle of myght, Wyth hys folke come over the flode; An C galeyse that were welle dyght, Wyth barons bold, and hye of blode. he wende to haue landyd, as it was ryght, At Dower, ther hym thoght fulle gode, And ther he fande many an hardy knyght That styffe in stoure a-gaynste hym stode.

Arthur sone hathe take the land
That hym was leveste in to lende;
Hys fele fomen that he ther found,
he wende by-fore had bene hys frend.
The kynge was wrothe, and wel ney wode,
And wyth hys men he gan vp wend;
So strong a stoure was vpon that stronde
That many a man ther had hys end.

Syr gawayne armyd hym in that stounde; Allas, to longe hys hede was bare, He was seke, and sore vnsond, hys woundis greuyd hym fulle sare. One hytte hym vpon the olde wounde Wyth a tronchon of an ore; There is good gawayne gone to grounde, That speche spake he neuyr more.

Bold men wyth bowes bente,
Boldely vp in botes yode,
And ryche hauberkis they ryve and rente,
that throw-owte braste the rede blode;
Grounden gleyves throw hem wente;
Tho games thoght theym nothynge gode;
But by that strong stoure was stente,
The stronge stremys ran alle on blode.

Arthur was so moche of myght, Was ther none that hym wyth-stode, He hewyd vppon ther helmes bryght, That throw ther brestes ran the blode. By than that endyd was the fight, The false were feld, som wer fledde To canterbery, alle that myght, To warne ther master syr mordred.

Mordred than made hym bowne, And boldely he wylle batayle abyde, Wyth helme, scheld, and hauberke browne, So alle hys rowte gan forthe ryde.

They hem mette vppon barendowne Fulle erly in the morowe tyde; Wyth gleyves grete, and gonfanowne, Grymly they gan to-gedyr ryde.

Arthur was of ryche a-raye, And hornys blew lowde on hyght, And mordred comyth glad and gay, As traytour that was false in fyght. Thay faught alle that longe day, Tyll the nyght was nyghed nyghe; Who had it sene, wele myght saye, That suche a stoure neuer he syghe.

Arthur than faught wyth hert good,
A nobler knyght was neuer noon,
Throw helmes into hede yt yoode
And steryd knyghtis bothe blode and bone.
mordred for wrathe was nye wode,
Callyd hys folke, and sayd to hem one,
"Releve yow, for crosse on rode,
Alas, thys day so sone is goone."

Fele men lyeth on bankys bare, Wyth bryght brondys throw-owte borne; Many a doughty man dede was thar, And many a lord hys lyfe hathe lorne. mordred was fulle of sorowe and care, At canterbery was he vpon the morne, And Arthur alle nyght he dwellyd thare, Hys frely folke lay hym by-forne.

Erely on the morow tyde
Arthur bad hys hornys blowe,
And callyd folke on euery syde,
And many a dede beryed on a rowe
In pittes that was depe and wyde,
On iche an hepe they layd hem lowe,
So alle that ouer gone and ryde
Som by there markys men myght knowe.

Arthur went to hys dyner thane, Hys frely folke hym folowed faste, But whan he fand syr gawayne In a shyppe laye dede by a maste, Or euyr he coveryd myght or mayne An C tymes hys hert nyghe braste.

Thay layd syr gawayne vpon a bere, And to the castelle they hym bare, And in a chapelle, a-mydde the quere, That bold baron they beryed thare. Arthur than changyd alle hys chere, What wondyr thoghe hys hert was sare! hys suster sone, that was hym dere, Off hym shold he here neuyr mare.

Syr Arthur, he wolde no lenger a-byde, Than had he alle maner of euylle reste, He sought aye forthe the southe syde, And toward Walys went he weste; At salusbury he thought to byde, At that tyme he thought was beste, And calle to hym by Whytesontyde Barons bold to batayle preste.

Vnto hym came many a doughty knyght, For wyde in worlde theyse wordys sprange, That syr Arthur hade alle the ryght, And mordred warred on hym wyth wronge. Hydowse it was to se wyth syght, Arthur-is oste was brode, and longe; And mordred, that was mykelle of myght, Wyth grete gyftes made hym stronge.

Sone after the feste of the trynyte,
Was a batayle by-twene hem sette;
That a sterne batayle ther shuld be,
For no lede wold they it lette;
And syr Arthur makethe game and glee
For myrth[e] that they shuld be mette;
And syr mordred can to the contre,
Wyth fele folke that ferre was fette.

At nyght, whan Arthur was brought in bedd, He shuld haue batayle vppon the morow, In stronge swenys he was by-stedde, That many a man that day shuld haue sorow; hym thowht he satte, in gold alle gledde, As he was comely kynge wyth crowne vpon a whele, that fulle wyde spredd, And alle hys knyghtis to hym bowne.

The whele was ferly ryche and rownd, In world was neuyr none halfe so hye, There-on he satte, rychely crownyd, Wyth many a besaunte, broche, and behe lokyd downe vpon the grownd, A blake water ther vndyr hym he see, Wyth dragons fele there lay vn-bownde That no man durst hem nyghe nyee.

he was wondyr ferd to falle A-monge the fendys ther that faught, The whele ouer-tornyd ther wyth alle, And eueryche by a lymme hym caught.

The kynge gan lowde crye and calle, As marred man of wytte vnsaught; hys chambyrlayns wakyd hym ther wyth alle, And woodely oute of hys slepe he raught.

Alle nyghte gan he wake and wepe, Wyth drery hert, and sorowfulle chere, And a-gaynste day he felle on slepe: A-boute hym was sette tapers sevyn;

Hym thought syr gawayne hym dyd kepe, Wyth mo folke than men can nevyn, By a ryuer that was brode and depe, Alle semyd angellys cam from heuyn.

The kynge was neuyr yit so fayne hys soster sone whan that he sve. "Welcome," he sayd, "syr gawayne, And thou myght leue, welle were me. Now, leue frend, wyth-outen layne, What ar the folke that folow the?" "Sertis, syr," he sayd a-gayne, "They byde in blysse ther I motte be.

lordys they were, and ladyes hende, Thys worldys lyffe that hanne for-lorne, Whyle I was man on lyffe to lende, A-gaynste her fone I faught hem forne; now fynde I them my moste frende, They blysse the tyme that I was borne, They asked leve wyth me to wende To mete wyth yow vpon thys morne.

A monthe day of trewse moste ye take, And than to batayle be ye bayne, Yow comethe to helpe lancelot du lake Wyth many a man mykelle of mayne: To morne the batavle ve moste for-sake. Or ellys, certis, ye shalle be slayne."

The kynge gan woffully wepe and wake. And sayd, "allas, thys rewffulle rayne!"

hastely hys clothys on hym he dyde. And to hys lordys gan he saye, "In stronge sweyneys I haue been stad, That glad I may not for no gamys gay; We muste vnto syr mordred sende. And founde to take an other day, Or trewly thys day I mon be shende: Thys know I in bed as I laye.

Goo thow, syr lucan de boteler, That wyse wordys haste in wolde, And loke, that thou take wyth the here Bysshopys fele, and barons bolde."

Forthe went they alle in fere, in trew bokys as it is tolde,
To syr mordred and hys lordis there they were,
And on Chrysphtis alle ynatolde

And an C knyghtis alle vn-tolde.

The knyghtis that ware of grete valoure, By-fore syr mordred as they stode, They gretyn hym wyth grete honowre, As barons bold, and hye of blode: "Ryght wele the gretys kynge Arthur, And praythe the wyth mylde mode, A monethe day to stynte thys stoure, For hys loue that dyed on rode."

Mordred that was bothe kene and bolde, Made hym breme as any bore at bay, And swore by Iudas that Ihesus <sup>1</sup> sold, "Suche sawes ar not now to saye; That he hathe hyght, he shalle it hold, The tone of vs shalle dye thys day; And telle hym trewly that I tolde I schalle hym marre yiffe that I may."

"Syr," thay sayd, wyth-owten lese,
"Thoug thou and he to batayle bowne,
many a ryche shalle rewe that reasse
By alle by-dalte vpon thys downe;
yit were it better for to sease,
And lette [hym] be kynge and bere the crowne,
And after hys dayes fulle dredelesse
ye to welde alle yngland, towre and towne."

mordred tho stode stylle a whyle, And wrothely vp hys eyne there wente, And sayd, "wyste I it were hys wylle To yeue me cornwale and kente;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the original Ihc. for Jesus Christ.

lette vs mete vpon yonder hylle, And talke to-gedyr wyth gode entente, Suche forwardys to fulle-fylle, There-to shall I me sone assent;

And yiffe we may wyth spechys spede Wyth trew trowthes of entayle, hold the bode worde that we bede To yeue me kente and cornwayle, Trew loue shalle ther lenge and lende, And sertis forwardys yif we fayle, Aythur to sterte vppon a stede styffely for to do batayle."

"Sur, wylle ye come in suche maner, Wyth twelve knyghtis or fourtene, Or ellys alle your streng[t]he in fere, Wyth helmes bryght, and hauberkys shene." "Sertys nay," than sayd he thore, "Othur warke thou thare not wene, But bothe oure hoostis shalle nyghe nere, And we shalle talke them by-twene."

They toke ther leue, wyth-owten lese, And wyghtely vpon there way wente; To kynge Arthur the way they chese, there that he satte wyth-in hys tente; "Syr, we have proferyd pease, Yiffe ye wille ther-to assente, Gyffe hym the crowne after your dayes, And in yower lyffe cornwayle and kente.

To hys by-heste yiffe ye wille holde, And your trouthe trewly ther-to plyght, maketh alle redy your men bolde, Wyth helme, swerd, and hauberke bryght; ye schalle mete vppon yone molde, That ayther oste may se wyth syght, And yiff your foreward fayle to holde There is no bote but for to fyght." But whan Arthur herd thys nevyn,
Trewly there-to he hathe sworne,
And arayed hym wyth batayles seuyn,
Wyth brode baners by-fore hym borne.
They lemyd lyght as any lemyn,
Whan they shold mete vpon the morne,
There lyves no man vndyr heuyn
A feyrer syght hath sene by-forne,

But mordred many men had mo. So mordred that was mykelle of mayne, he had euyr xij a-gaynste hym two Off barons bold to batayle bayne.

Arthur and mordred bothe were thro Shuld mete bothe vpon a playne, The wyse shuld come to and fro To make a-cord, the sothe to sayne.

Arthur in hys herte hathe caste, And to hys lordis gan he saye, "To yonder traytour haue I no truste But that he wolle vs falselly be-traye; Yiff we may not oure forwardys faste, And ye se any wepyn drayne, presythe forthe as prices praste, That he and alle hys hoste be slayne."

mordred, that was kene and thro, hys frely folke he sayd to-forne, "I wote that Arthur is fulle woo That he hathe thus hys landys lorne; Wyth fourtene knyghtis, and no mo, shalle we mete at yondyr thorne; yiff any treason by-twene vs go, That brode baners forth be borne."

Arthur, wyth knyghtis fully xiiij, To that thorne on fote they fonde, Wyth helme, sheld, and hauberke shene, Ryght so they trotted vppon the grownde.

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#### Le Morte Arthur

But as they a-cordyd shulde haue bene, An edder glode forth vpon the grownde, he stange a knyght, that men myght sene That he was seke, and fulle vn-sownde;

Owte he brayed wyth a swerd bryght,—
To kylle the adder had he thogh[t]e,—
Whan Arthur party saw that syght,
Frely they to-gedyr sought;
There was no thynge wyth-stande theym myght,
They wend that treson had bene wroghte;
That day dyed many a doughty knyght,
And many a boldeman was broght to noght.

Arthur stert vpon hys stede, He saw no thyng hym wyth-stand myght; mordred owte of wytte nere yede, And wrothely in-to hys sadylle he lyght: Off a-corde was no thyng to bede, But fewtred sperys, and to-geder sprente, Fulle many a doughty man of dede Sone there was leyde vpon the bente.

mordred I-maryd many a man,
And boldely he gan hys batayle abyde,
So sternely oute hys stede ranne,
many a rowte he gan throw ryde.
Arthur of batayle neuyr blanne
To dele woundys wykke and wyde,
Fro the morow that it by-ganne,
Tylle it was nere the nyghtis tyde;

There was many a spere spente,
And many a thro word they spake,
many a bronde was bowyd, and bente,
And many a knyghtis helme they brake.
Ryche helmes they roffe and rente,
The ryche rowtes gan to-gedyr rayke,
And C thousand vpon the bente,
The boldest or evyn was made ryght meke.

Sythe bretayne owte of troy was sought, And made in bretayne hys owne wonne, Suche wondrys neuyr ere was wroght, Neuyr yit vnder the sonne.
By evyn, levyd was there noght
That euyr steryd wyth blode or bone,
But Arthur, and ij that he thedyr broghte,
And mordred was levyd there alone;

The tone was lucan de botelere
That bled at many a bale-fulle wound,
And hys brodyr, syr bedwere,
Was sely seke, and sore vnsounde.
Than spake Arthur these wordys there,
"Shalle we not brynge thys theffe to ground?"
A spere he gryped wyth felle chere,
And felly they gan to-gedyr found:

he hytte mordred amydde the breste, And oute at the bakke bone hym bare; There hathe mordred hys lyffe loste, That speche spake he neuyr mare; But kenely vp hys arme he caste, And yaff Arthur a wound sare In to the hede, throw the helme and creste, That iij tymes he swownyd thare.

Syr lucan, and syr Bedwere, By-twene theym two the kynge vp-held, So forthe went tho iij in fere, And alle were slayne that lay in feld. The doughty kynge that was hem dere, For sore myght not hym-self weld; To a chapelle they went in fere, Off bote they saw no better beld.

Alle nyght thay in the chapelle laye Be the see syde, as I yow newyn, To mary, "mercy" cryand aye, Wyth drery herte and sorowfulle stevyn; And to hyr leue sonne gan they pray, "Ihesu, for thy namys sevyn, Wis hys sowle the ryght way, That he lese not the blysse of hevyn."

As syr lucan de boteler stode, he sey folk vppon playnes hye, Bold barons of bone and blode, They refte theym besaunt, broche, and bee; And to the kynge agayne thay yode Hym to warne wyth wordys slee;

To the kynge spake he fulle stylle Rewffully as he myght than rowne, "Syr, I haue bene at yone hylle, There fele folke drawen to the downe; I note whedyr they wylle vs good or ylle, I rede we buske, and make us bowne, yiff it be your worthy wylle, That we wende to some towne."

"Now, syr lucan, as thow radde, lyfte me vp, whyle that I may laste;" Bothe hys armes on hym he sprad Wyth alle hys streng[t]h to hold hym faste; The kynge was wondyd, and for-bled, And swownyng, on hym hys eyne he caste; Syr lucan was hard by-stadde, He held the kynge to hys owne herte braste.

Whan the kynge had swounyd there, By an auter vp he stode,
Syr lucan that was hym dere
Lay dede, and fomyd in the blode;
Hys bold brothyr syr Bedwere,
Fulle mykelle mornyd in hys mode,
For sorow he mygte not nyghe hym nere,
But euyr wepyd as he were wode.

The kynge tornyd hym there he stode To syr Bedwere, wyth wordys kene,

"Have excalaber, my swerd good,
A better brond was neuyr sene,
Go, caste it in the salt flode,
And thou shalt se wonder, as I wene,
hye the faste, for crosse on rode
And telle me what thou hast ther sene."

The knyght was bothe hende and free; To save that swerd he was fulle glad, And thought, whethyr I better bee yif neuyr man it after had; And I it caste it to the see, Off mold was neuyr man so mad. The swerd he hyd vndyr a tree, And sayd, "syr, I ded as ye me bad."

"What saw thow there?" than sayd the kynge,
"Telle me now, yiff thow can;"
"Sertes syr," he sayd, "nothynge
But watres depe, and wawes wanne."
"A, now thou haste broke my byddynge!
Why haste thou do so, thow false man?
A-nother bode thou muste be brynge."
Thanne carefully the knyght forthe ranne,

And thought the swerd yit he wold hyde, And keste the scauberke in the flode, "Yif any aventurs shalle be-tyde, There-by shalle I se tokenys goode." In-to the see hee lette the scauberke glyde; A whyle on the land hee there stode; Than to the kynge he wente that tyde And sayd, "syr, it is done by the rode."

And to the swerd[e] sone he sought.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Saw thow any wondres more?"
"Sertys syr, I saw nought."

<sup>&</sup>quot;A! false traytor," he sayd thore,
"Twyse thou haste me treson wroght;
That shalle thow rew sely sore,
And be thou bold it shalbe bought."
The knyght than cryed, "lord, thyn ore,"

Syr bedwere saw that bote was beste, And to the good swerd he wente; In-to the see he hyt keste; Than myght he see what that it mente; There cam an hand, wyth-outen reste, Oute of the water, and feyre it hente, And brandysshyd as it shuld braste, And sythe, as gleme, a-way it glente.

To the kynge a-gayne wente he thare And sayd, "leve syr, I saw an hand; Oute of the water it cam alle bare, And thryse brandysshyd that ryche brande." "helpe me sone that I ware there."

he lede hys lord vnto that stronde; A ryche shyppe wyth maste and ore, Fulle of ladyes there they fonde.

The ladyes, that were feyre and free, Curteysly the kynge gan they fonge, And one, that bryghtest was of blee, Wepyd sore, and handys wrange, "Broder," she sayd, "wo ys me; Fro lechyng hastow be to longe, I wote that gretely greuyth me, For thy paynes ar fulle stronge."

The knyght kest a rewfulle rowne,
There he stode, sore and vnsownde,
And say, "lord, whedyr ar ye bowne,
Allas, whedyr wylle ye fro me fownde?"
The kynge pake wyth a sory sowne,
"I wylle wende a lytelle stownde
In to the vale of Avelovne,
A whyle to hele me of my wounde."

Whan the shyppe from the land was broght, Syr bedwere saw of hem no more, Throw the forest forthe he soughte, On hyllys, and holtys hore;

Of hys lyffe rought he ryght noght, Alle nyght he went wepynge sore, A-gaynste the day he fownde ther wrought A chapelle by-twene ij holtes hore.

To the chapelle he toke the way; There myght he se a woundyr syght, Than saw he where an ermyte laye By-fore a tombe, that new was dyghte, And coveryd it was wyth marbolle graye, And wyth ryche lettres rayled aryght; There-on an herse, sothely to saye, Wyth an C tappers lyghte.

Vnto the ermyte wente he thare, And askyd who was beryed there; The ermyte answeryd swythe yare, "There-of can I telle no more, A-bowte mydnyght were ladyes here, In world ne wyste I what they were, Thys body they broght vppon a bere And beryed it wyth woundys sore.

Besavntis offred they here bryght,
I hope an C povnd, and more,
And bad me pray, bothe day and nyght,
For hym that is buryed in these moldys hore,
Vnto ower lady, bothe day and nyght,
That she hys sowle helpe sholde."

The knyght redde the lettres a-ryght, For sorow he felle vnto the folde;

"Ermyte," he sayd, "wyth-oute lesynge here lyeth my lord that I haue lorne, Bold arthur, the beste kynge
That euyr was in bretayne borne;
Yif me som of thy clothynge,
For hym that bare the crowne of thorne,
And leue that I may wyth the lenge
Whyle I may leve, and pray hym forne."

The holy ermyte wolde not wounde,—Some tyme archebishop he was,
That mordred flemyd oute of londe,
And in the wode hys wonnyng chase;—he thankyd Ihesu alle of hys sound
That syr bedwere was comyn in pease;
he resayved hym wyth herte and honde,
To-gedyr to dwelle wyth-outen lese.

Whan quene Gaynor, the kynges wyffe, Wyste that alle was gone to wrake, A-way she went, wyth ladys fyve, To Avmysbery, a nonne hyr for to make; Ther-in she lyved an holy lyffe, In prayers for to wepe, and wake; neuyr after she cowde be blythe; There weryd she clothys whyte and blake.

Whan thys tydyngis was to launcelot broght, What wondyr though hys hert were sore! hys men, hys frendys, to him sought, And alle the wyse that wyth hym were; her gallayes were alle redy wroght, They buskyd theyme, and made yare; To helpe Arthur was ther thoght, And make mordred of blysse fulle bare.

lancelot had crownyd kyngis sevyn,
Erlys fele, and barons bold;
The nombyr of knyghtis I can not nevyn,
The squyres to fele to be told,
They lemyd lyght as any leme;
The wynde was as hem-self wold,
Throw the grace of god of hevyn
At douer they toke hauyn and hold.

There herd telle lancelot in that towne,— In lond it is not for to layne, how they had faught at barendowne, And how beryed was syr gawayne, And how mordred wold be kynge wyth crowne, And how ayther of theym had other slayn, And alle that were to batayle bowne At salysbery lay dede vpon the playne:

Also in londe herd hyt kythe
That made hys hert wonder sare,
quene Gaynour, the kyngis wyffe,
Myche had levyd in sorow and care;
A-way she went, wyth ladyes fyve,
In lond they wyste not whedyr whar,
Dolwyn dede, or to be on lyve;
That made hys mornyng moche the mare.

lancelot clepid hys kyngis wyth crowne, (Syr bors stode hym nere be-syde,) he sayd, "lordyngis, I wylle wend to-forne, And by these bankys ye shalle a-byde Vnto fyftene dayes at the morne, In lond what so euyr vs be-tyde, To herkyn what lord hys lyffe hathe lorne loke ye rappe yow not vp to ryde."

There had he nouther roo, ne reste,
But forthe he went wyth drery mode,
And iij dayes he went euyn weste,
As man that cowde nother yvelle nor good;
Than syghe he where a towre by weste
Was byggyd, by a burnys flode,
There he hopyd it were beste
For to gete hym som lyves stode.

As he cam throw a cloyster clere,—
Alle-moste for wepynge he was mad,—
he see a lady, bryght of lere,
In nonnys clothyng was she clad;
Thryse she swownyd swyftely there,
So stronge paynes she was in stad
That many a man 1 than nyghed hyr nere,
And to hyr chambyr was she ladde;

"Mercy madame," they sayd alle,
"For Ihesu, that is kynge of blysse,
Is there any byrd in boure or halle
hathe wrathed yow?" she sayd, "nay I-wysse."
lancelot to hyr gan they calle,
The abbes, and the other nonnys I-wysse,
They that wonyd wyth-in the walle;
In covnselle there than sayd they thus;

"Abbes, to you I knowlache here,
That throw thys ylke man and me,—
For we to-gedyr han loved vs dere,—
Alle thys sorowfulle werre hathe be;
my lord is slayne that had no pere,
And many a doughty knyght and free,
There-fore for sorowe I dyed nere,
As sone as I euyr hym gan see.

Whan I hym see, the sothe to say, Alle my herte by-gan to colde, That euyr I shuld a-byde thys day, To se so many barons bolde Shuld for vs be slayne a-way. Oure wylle hathe be to sore bought sold; But god, that alle myghtis maye, Now hathe me sette where I wylle hold.

I-sette I am in suche a place, my sowle hele I wylle a-byde
Telle god send me som grace,
Throw mercy of hys woundys wyde,
That I may do so in thys place
my synnys to a-mende thys ilke tyde,
After to haue a syght of hys face
At domys day on hys ryght syde:

There-fore, syr lancelot du lake, For my loue now I the pray my company thow aye for-sake, And to thy kyngdome thow take thy way, And kepe thy reme from werre and wrake, And take a wyffe wyth her to play; And loue wele than thy worldys make, God yiff yow ioye to-gedyr I pray;

Vnto god I pray, alle-myghty kynge, he yeffe yow to-gedyr ioye and blysse, But I be[se]che the, in alle thynge, That newyr in thy lyffe after thysse ne come to me for no sokerynge, Nor send me sond, but dwelle in blysse: I pray to god euyr lastynge To graunte me grace to mend my mysse."

"Now, swete madame, that wold I not doo To haue alle the world vnto my mode; So vntrew fynd ye me neuyr mo; It for to do, cryste me for-bede;

For-bede it god, that euyr I shold A-gaynste yow worche so grete vnryght, Syne we to-gedyr vpon thys mold haue led owre lyffe by day and nyght; Vnto god I yiffe a heste to holde, The same desteny that yow is dyghte I wille resseyve in som house bolde To plese here-after god all-myght;

To please god alle that I maye I shalle here-after do myne entente, And euyr for yow specyally pray, While god wylle me lyffe lente."

"A, wylte thow so," the quene gan say,
"Fulle-fylle thys forward that thou has ment?"
lancelot sayd, "yiff I sayd nay,
I were wele worthy to be brent;

Brent to bene worthy I were, Yiff I wold take non suche a lyffe To byde in penance as ye do here, And suffre for god sorow and stryffe As we in lykynge lyffed in fere. By mary, moder, made, and wyffe, Tylle god vs departe wyth dethes dere To penance I yeld me here as blythe;

Alle blyve to penance I wylle me take, As I may fynde any ermyte That wylle me resseyue for goddys sake, me to clothe wyth whyte and blake."

The sorow that the tone to the tother gan make

myght none erthely man se hytte.

"madame," than sayd launcelot de lake, kysse me, and I shalle wende as-tyte."

"nay," sayd the quene, "that wylle I not. launcelot, thynke on that no more, To absteyne vs we muste haue thought, For suche we haue delyted in ore; lett vs thynk on hym that vs hathe bought, And we shalle please god ther-fore; Thynke on thys world, how there is noght But warre, and stryffe, and batayle sore."

What helpeth lenger for to spelle? Wyth that they gan departe in twene, But none erthely man covde telle The sorow that there by-gan to bene; Wryngyng ther handis, and lowde they yelle, As they neuyr more shuld blynne, And sythe in swonne bothe downe they felle. Who saw that sorow, euyr myght it mene!

But ladyes than, wyth mornyng chere, In-to the chambyr the quene they bare, And alle fulle besy made theym there, To cover the quene of hyr care.

many also that wyth lancelot were, They comforte hym w[yth] rewfulle care; Whan he was coveryd, he toke hys gere, And went from thense wyth-outen mare. hys hert was hevy as any lede,
And leuer he was hys lyffe haue lorne,
he sayd "Ryghtwosse god, what is my rede?
Allas, for-bare, why was I borne?"
A-way he went, as he had fled,
To a foreste that was hym by-forne,
hys lyffe fayne he wold haue leuyd,
hys ryche a-tyre he wold haue of torne.

Alle nyght gan he wepe, and wrynge, And went a-boute as he were wode; Erely as the day gan sprynge, Tho syghe he where a chapelle stode; A belle herd he rewfully rynge, he hyed hym than, and thedyr yode, A preste was redy for to synge, And masse he herd, wyth drery mode;

The arshebysshoppe was ermyte thare, That flemyd was for hys werkys trew; The masse he sange wyth syghyng sare, And ofte he changyd hyde, and hewe. Syr bedwere had sorow and care, And ofte mornyd for the werkys newe: Aftyr masse was morny[n]ge mare, Whan iche of hem othyr knewe.

Whan the sorow was to the ende, The byshope toke hys obbyte thare And welcomyd launcelot as the hend, And on hys knees downe gan he fare; "Syr, ye be welcome as oure frende Vnto thys byggyng in bankys bare, Were it yower wylle wyth vs to lende Thys one nyght yif ye may [no] mare,"

Whan they hym knew at the laste, Feyre in armys they gan hym folde, And sythe he askyd frely faste Off Arthur, and of other bolde.

An C tymes hys hert ne[re] braste, Whyle syr Bedwere the tale told; To Arthur-is tombe he caste, Hys carefulle corage wexid alle cold;

He threw hys armys to the walle,
That ryche were and bryght of blee,
By-fore the e[r]myte he gan downe falle,
And comely knelyd vpon hys knee:
Than he shrove hym of hys synnes alle,
And prayd "he myght hys broder be,
To serue god in boure, and halle,—
That myght-fulle kynge of mercy free."

That holy bisshope nold not blynne,
But blythe was to do hys boone,
He resseyuyd hym, wyth wele and wynne,
And thankyd Ihesu trew in trone,
And shroffe hym ther of hys synne
As clene as he had neuyr done none,
And sythe he kyste hym, cheke and chynne,
And an abbyte there dyd hym vpon.

hys grete hooste at dover laye,
And wende he shuld haue comyn a-gayne;
Tylle after by-felle vpon a day,
Syr lyonelle, that was mekylle of mayne,
Wyth fyffty lordys, the sothe to saye,
To seche hys lord he was fulle fayne;
To london he toke the ryght way,
Allas for woo, there was he slayne.

Bors de gawnes wold no lenger abyde, But buskyd hym, and made alle bowne, And bad alle the oste homeward ryde;— God send theym wynd and wedyr rownd;— To seke lancelot wylle he ryde; Ector, and eche, dywerse wayes yode, And bors sowght forthe the weste syde, As he that cowde nowther yvelle nor gode. Fulle erly in a morow tyde,
In a foreste he fownd a welle;
he rode euyr forthe by the ryver syde,
Tylle he had syght of a chapelle;
There at masse thought he a-byde,
Rewfully he herd a belle rynge,
Ther lancelot he fand, wyth mekelle pryde,
And prayd he myght wyth hym there dwelle.

Or the halfe yere were comen to the ende, There was comyn of there felowse sevyn, Where yehone had sought ther frend, Wyth sorowfulle herte, and drery stevyn. had neuyr none wylle a-way to wende Whan they herd of launcelot nevyn, But alle to-gedyr there gan they lende, As it was goddys wylle of heuyn.

holyche alle the sevyn yerys, lancelot was preste, and masse songe, In penance, and in dyverse prayers, That lyffe hym thought no thyng longe.

Syr bors, and hys other ferys, On bokys redde, and bellys ronge, So lytelle they wexe of lyn and lerys, Theym to know it was stronge.

hytte felle, a-gayne an euyn tyde, That launcelot sekenyd sely sare, The bysshop he clepyd to hys syde, And alle hys felaws lesse and mare; he sayd, "bretherne, I may no lenger a byde, my balefulle blode of lyffe is bare; What bate is it to hele and hyde, my fowle flesshe wille to erthe fare,

but, bretherne, I pray yow to nyght, To-morow, whan ye fynde me dede, vpon a bere that ye wylle me dyght, And to Ioyes garde than me lede.

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For the loue of god alle-myght, Bery my body in that stede; Some tyme my trowthe ther-to I plyght, Allas, me for-thynketh that I so dyd."

"mercy syr," they sayd alle three,
"for hys loue that dyed on rode;
yif any yvelle haue grevyd the,
hyt ys bot hevynesse of yower blode;
To-morow ye shalle better be,
Whan were ye but of comforte gode."
Merely spake alle men but he,
But streyght vnto hys bed he yode,

And clepyd the bysshope hym vntylle, And shrove hym of hys synnes clene, Off alle hys synnes, loude and stylle, And of hys synnes myche dyd he mene; Ther he resseyved wyth good wylle God, mary-is sonne, mayden clene. Than bors of wepyng had neuyr hys fylle, To bedde they yede than alle by-dene.

A lytelle whyle by-fore the day, As the bysshop lay in hys bed, A laughter toke hym there he laye, That alle they were ryght sore a-drede; They wakenyd hym, for sothe to saye, And askyd, "yif he were hard by-sted." he sayd, "Allas, and wele a-way, Why ne had I lenger thus be ledde?

Allas, why nyghed ye me nye
To a-wake me in word or stevyn?
here was launcelot bryght of blee,
Wyth angellis xxx thousand and sevyn;
hym they bare vp on hye,
A-gaynste hym openyd the gatys of hevyn;
Suche a syght ryght now I see,
Is none in erthe that myght it nevyn."

"Syr," thay sayd, "for crosse on rode, Dothe suche wordys clene a-way, Syr lancelot eylythe no thynge but gode, he shalle be hole by pryme of day."

Candelle they lyght, and to hym yode, And fownde hym dede, for sothe to saye, Rede and fayer of flesshe and blode

Ryght as he in slepynge laye.

"Allas, syr bors, that I was borne, That euyr I shuld see thys in dede, The beste knyght hys lyffe hathe lorne That euyr in stoure by-strode a stede; Ihesu, that crownyd was wyth thorne, In heuyn hys soule foster and fede."

Vnto the fyfty day at the morne They lefte not for to synge and rede,

And after, they made them a bere, The bysshop, and these other bolde, And forthe they wente, alle in fere, To Ioyes garde, that ryche hold. In a chapelle, a-myddys the quere, A graue they made as thay wolde, And iij dayes they wakyd hym there, In the castelle wyth carys colde.

Ryght as they stode a-bowte the bere, And to bereynge hym shold haue browght, In cam syr Ector, hys brodyr dere, That vij yere a-fore had hym sought; he lokyd vp in to the quere, To here a masse than had he thought, For that they alle ravysshyd were, They knew hym, and he hem nought:—

Syr bors bothe wepte, and sange, Whan they that feyre faste vnfold, There was none but hys handys wrange, The bysshop, nor none of the other bold.

Syr Ector than thought longe; What thys corps was, feyne wete he wolde, An C tymes hys herte nye sprange By that bors had hym the tale tolde.

Fulle hendely syr bors to hym spakke And sayd "welcome syr Ector, I-wysse, here lyethe my lord lancelot du lake for whome that we haue mornyd thus."

Than in armys they gan hym take, The dede body to clyppe and kysse, And prayed alle nyght he myght hym wake For Ihesu love, kynge of blysse.

Syr Ector of hys wytte nere wente, Walowed and wronge, as he were wode, So wofully hys mone he mente, hys sorow myngyd alle hys mode. Whan the corps in armys he hente, The terys owte of hys yen yode; At the laste they myght no lenger stent, But beryed hym wyth drery mode;

Sythen on there knees they knelyd downe, Grete sorow it was to se wyth syght, "Vnto Ihesu cryste aske I a boone, And to hys moder, mary bryght; "lord, as thow madyste bothe sonne and mone, And god and man arte moste of myght, Brynge thys sowle vnto thy trone And euyr thow rewdyste on gentylle knyght."

Syr Ector tent not to hys stede,
Whedyr he wold stynt, or renne away;
But wyth theym to dwelle and lede,
For lancelot alle hys lyffe to pray.
On hym dyd he armytes wede,
And to hyr chapelle went hyr way;
A fourtenyght on fote they yede
Or they home come, for sothe to say.

Whan they came to Avmysbery,
Dede they faunde Gaynour the quene,
Wyth roddys feyre, and rede as chery,
And forthe they bare hyr theym by-twene,
And beryed hyr wyth masse fulle merry
By syr Arthur, as I yow mene.
Now hyght there chapelle glassynbery,
An abbay fulle ryche, of order clene.

Off lancelot du lake telle I no more, But thus by-leve these ermytes sevyn; And yit is Arthur beryed thore, And quene Gaynour, as I yow nevyn, Wyth monkes that ar ryght of lore They rede, and synge, wyth mylde stevyn, "Ihesu, that suffred woundes sore, Graunt vs alle the blysse of hevyn!"

Amen.

Explycit le morte Arthur.



### GLOSSARY

BEMYS, trumpets

A. adj. all; conj. if, and ABBYTE, robe ABYE, pay the penalty for, suffer for: bret. ABRUPT A-CORDEMENT, agreement ACOUNTRES, encounters ADYGHT, prepared AGOO, gone AGULTE, Wronged; p.p. AGILTE ALBLASTERS, Cross-bows ALSO, intensive adverb, as. AND, if ANTOURE, see aunier A-PARAYLE, APPAR(R)AYLE, furnishings, resource in arms APARAYLMENTE, apparel ARE, ere AS, an intensive adverb ASSWYTHE, see swithe AS-TYTE, quickly AUGHT, owned AUNTER, AUNT(E)RE, ANTOURE. adventure, fortune; bl. AUN-TRES, AUNTUR(E)S, AVENTURES AUTER, altar AVENTURES, see aunter AWAYTES, watches AWISE, bethink

BALE, SOFTOW
BALEF(F)ULLE, grievous
BARE, boar
BATAYLES, battalions
BAYNE, obedient, ready, straight.
P. 122, adv. readily, or pron.
both
BE, BY, when
BE(E), ring; pl. BEGHE
BE-CRYED, accused
BEDE, inf., pres. offer, proclaim
BEDENE, BYDENE, completely,
together
BEGHE, see be

BE-LEUE, leave; pres. BY-LEVE BE-LEVE, remain; pres. BE-LEFTE.

BEGREDDE, accused

BELD, comfort

BY-LEFTE

AYTHER, AYTHUR, either

BENTE, field BESAUNT(E), bezant (a Byzantine coin=10-20s.); pl. BESAUNTES BE-SETTE, BY-SETTE, employed BETHE, pres., fut., imv. be BETTE, beat BLE(E), colour, countenance BYNDIS, becomes blind BLYNNE, decline, stop: BLANNE BLYVE, quickly BODDYN, prayed BODE, report; BODE WORD, promise BO(U)GHT, paid for. TO SORE BOUGHT SOLD, purchased too BORD(E), table; pl. BORDES BOTE, amends, remedy BOTHIS, of both. YOUR BOTHIS. of both of you BOWNE, ready BRAST(E), break, burst BRAUNDISSHID YEHE moved, displayed, every limb BRAYED, drew suddenly BREME, fierce BRENNE, burn; pret. BRENTE; p.p. BRENT(E) BROWGH, town BUSKE, inf., pres. make ready, BUSKES, hasten; pres. pret. BUSKED(E), BUSKYD; p.p. BUSKYD BY, be; see be BY-CALLE, accuse BY-DALTE, finished BYDENE, see bedene BYGGED, built BYGGYNG, building BY-KNOW, confess BY-MENE, mean BYRD, bride, lady BY-SETTE, see be-sette BY-TAKE, deliver

can, began (P. 179, with dependent verb of motion not expressed)

204 CASTE, turned CHERE, countenance, expression, mood CHESE, choose; pret. CHASE, CHESE CLEPIS, calls; pret. CLEPID, CLEPYD. See klebis CLONGYN, withered CLOUGHIS, ravine's CLYPPE, embrace; pres. CLYPPIS; bret. CLYPPED coloure, face COMSEMENTE, commencement CORAGE, heart CORDEMENT, accord COUDE, COVDE, COWDE, knew, was able COUTH(E), pret., p.p. could, knew COVDE, see coude COVER, make, recover; pret., p.p. COVERYD, recovered COWDE, see coude CRAFTE, skill CRAFTELY, skilfully CRAFTY, skilful CRYE, company (of contestants at a tourney) DALE, deal; pret. DALTYN DARE, be afraid DEFFEND, exclude DELE, bit DEPARTE, inf., fut. end, part; pres. DEPARTITH; pret. DEPA(R)TEN; p.p. departed. DERE, s., v. harm DERFE, terrible DE(S)SE, daïs DEVOYEDE, depart from DIGHT, DYGHT, inf., pret. attend to, dispose of, dress, make ready, put; imv. DIGHT; p.p. DYGHT(E), DIGHT(E) Do, cause to, put; pret. DEDE, DID, DYD(E); imv. DOTHE; inf., p.p. DONE DOEL(L)E, DUELLE, DWELLE, pity, SOTTOW DOLWYN, buried DOME, judgment, command; pl. DOMYS DORE, endure DRAKE, dragon DRECHYD, disturbed

DREDELISSE, fearless

DUELLE, see doelle

DRYHE, far off; ON DRYHE, apart

DREGHE, great

DWELLE, see doelle DYGHT, see dight DYNTE, blow; pl. DYNTIS DYSHERE, disclose EFTE, again EME, uncle; EME-IS, uncle's ENDRIS, other ENTAYLE, character, rank ENTENTE, endeavour ENTERDITE, ENTERDYTE. interdict: b.b. ENTYRDYTED EUERYCHE, EUERYCHONE. every EYLES, EYLYTHE, ails FALLYS, befits; pret. FELLE, was fitting, happened: p.p. FALLE. happened FANDE, inf., pret. go FARE, affair FASTE, confirm FEE, fief, land FELE, many FERD, afraid FERE, S. company; IN FERE, together; pl. FERYS, companions FERE, adi, sound FERLY, wonderfully FETTE, fetched FEWTRED, put into fewter, i.e. a felt-lined rest for the spear. attached to the saddle FLEME, reject, banish; pret., p.p. FLEMYD FOLD(E), v. bend FOLDE, v. vield FOLDE, S. ground FOLYD, foolish FONE, s. foes FONE, adj. few FONGE, receive; pret. FONE, took FOR-BLED, weakened by loss of blood FOR-BRENDE, BRENT, burned up, burned to death FOR(E)WARD, agreement, offer; pl. FORWARDYS FOR-LORNE, lost FORNE, for FOR-SETTE, sit round with a guard FOR-THY, because, wherefore FOR-THYNKE, repent; pres. FOR-THYNKETH FOR-TO RYDE, by riding; WHY,

because, on condition that

FOR-WERY, tired out

FOR-WONDRED, full of wonder
FOR-YELDE, reward
FOUND(E), FOWND(E), advance, go,
strive, thrust; imu. FOUNDIS
FRE(E), noble, generous
FRELY, adj. noble; adv. very
FRESTE, FRISTE, FRYSTE, first
FREYNED, asked
FRISTE, see freste
FRYSTE, see freste
FRYSTE, see freste
FRYSTE, on DEDE-FRO. parted

from—by death

GA, yea

GABBE, tell lies; pret. GABBYD

GAN(NE), GON(NE), GONE, began,
did; p.p. GONNE

GARE, see yare

GATYS, thus gatys, in this way

GAYNE, straight

GAYNES, v. impersonal, profits

GEME, take care of

GENDYR, other

GAFF(E)

GILTE, WILLE, give pain; pret.

GAFF(E)

GILTE, wronged

GLAD, be glad

GLITE, wronged GLAD, be glad GLEDDE, clad GLEDE, glowing coal GLEEVE, jests GLENTE, glinted GLEYVES, spears GLODE, glided

GONFANOWNE, gonfalon, a small pennon attached to the spear below the head

below the head graythes, makes ready; pret.

GRAYTHID
GRE(E), prize
GREDDE, drew
GREDE, inf., pres. cry
GREDYS, accusest
GRETLYCHE, greatly
GRYFELY, grovelling
GYNNE, strategem

HALDYS, holds
HEDYR, hither
HELDE, incline, yield
HELE, v. conceal
HELE, s. salvation
HEM, them
HEND(E), adi. courteous, gentle
HEND(E)LY, courteously
HENTE, took; p.p. HENT
HER(E), HYR, their

HERSE, frame for candles burned for the dead
HEST(E), promise, vow
HIGHT, see hyght
HOLDE, surely
HOLLY, see holyche
HOLTES, HOLTYS, groves
HOLYS, holes
HOFF, think
HORSYS, mounts; pret. horsyd
HOUVD, HOVID, lingered
HYDE, colour, in the phrase hyde
and hewe
HYGHT, is called; pret. HIGHTE,

HYGHT, is called; pret. HIGHTE, HYGHT; p.p. HIGHT; p.p. HETTE, HYGHT(E), promised HYR, see her

I-BENTE, adorned
ICHE, ICHE A, YCHE, each, every
ICHONE, YCHONE, each one
I-DIGHTE, made ready
ILKE, YLKE, same
I-MANASED, menaced
I-MARYD, marred
INCHES(S)OUN, occasion
I-RADE, read
I-WYSSE, surely

KENE, bold

KENELY, boldly

KEPE, heed, watch; pres. KEPETH; pret. KEPIT
KEST(E), pret. cast; p.p. KESTE
KITHE, see kythe
KLEPIS, calls; pret. KLEPITTE,
KLEPYD. See clepis
KNOWLACHE, acknowledge
KYNNES, kind of
KYTHE, KITHE, declare, display,
make known; pret. KYD(DE);

p.p. KYTHE LASSE, less LAYNE, v. conceal; s. concealment LEDE, v. carry, live LEDE, hand, man LEFF, LEUE, dear LEFTE, remained LELYEST, most loyally LEME, a light LEM(M)AN, mistress, lover LEMYD, shone LEMYN, lightning LEND(E), stay; pret., p.p. LENTE LENE, grant LENGE, linger LERE, v. learn

LEYRE, s. countenance; pl. LERYS LETE, let fall LETT(E), caused LETTE, v. inf., pret. cease, prevent LETTE, s. hindrance LEUE, see left LEUE, LEVE, v. live LEUE, v. permit LEUYD, LEVYD, pret., p.p. left LEVE, see leue LEVYD, see leuvd LEYRE, see lere LIGGYS, lies LIGHT, settled LOGGEN, arranged LOKYD, lodged LONE, concealment LONGE, belong; pret. LONGEDE, belonged LOREME, bridal-rein LORNE, lost LOUGH(E), laughed LOUGHE, full LYN, limb LYTHE, hear, listen; DONE TO

MARE, more MARRED, troubled MAY(E), maiden MAYN(E), strength MEKELLE, MEKILLE, MEKYLLE, adj., adv. great, many, much; see mychelle MENE, remember, bemoan MENE, inf., pres. tell, speak; pret., p.p. MENT MESE, course MESSAGE, messenger; in, on message, in the part of a messenger MEYNE, company MO(0), more, others

LYTHE, made known

MAKE, mate

MOCHELLE, see mychelle MODE, manner, mind, heart MOLD, earth; pl. MOLDYS MON, pres. must. MOTTE, may MOW(E), may MYCHE, much MYCHELLE, MYKELLE, MYKYLLE, adv., great, MOCHELLE, adv.

many, much MYNGYD, disturbed MYNNE, remind

MYSSE, sin

NAD(E), NADDE, had not NAN, none, not at all NAS, was not NE, nor, not (also as one member of a double negative) NEDELYNGIS, necessarily NELLE, NYLL(E), will not

NERE, were not NEUYNE, NEVYN, NEWYN, name. tell

No, not NOGT(E), not NOLD(E), would not NOME, took NONE, noon

NOTE, know not NYEE, nigh NYGHE, draw nigh NYLL(E) see nelle

NYS, is not NYSE, foolish NYSTE, wist not

o, one **OBBYTE**, habit ONE, alone; Two ONE, two alone ON LYFF, alive OR(E), adv., conj., prep. before

ORE, mercy OURESTE, uppermost OUTHER, either

PALLE, rich cloth PARAMOURE, as a lover PARAYLLE, apparel PAYNED, strove PIGHT, PYGHT, pitched

POMELLES, apple-shaped ornaments on the poles of tents PRASTE, see prest, prices PRESONS, imprisonment PRESTE, ready, eager PRESYTHE, press PREVITE, private affairs PRICES PRASTE, horsemen PRYCE, choice PYGHT, see pight

QUERE, choir QUESTE, a judicial inquiry QUITE, free QUYTES, requites

RANDOWNE, speed; A GRETE RAN-DOWNE, at great speed RAP(P)E, hasten

RAUGHT, started RAYED, arranged RAYKE, charge RAYLED, adorned REASE, RES(S)E, attack, pilgrim-REDE, v., inf., pres., subj. counsel, read, rule, say, tell; RADDLE REDE, s. advice, plan RELEVE, recover REME, realm RENTE, revenue RES(S)E, see rease REWDYSTE, hadst pity RIGGE, back RIGHT, straight, straightway RODDYS, rosy colour RODE, rosy colour ROFFE, ROVE, split Roo, quiet ROUGHT, recked ROWND, favourable ROWNE, v. speak; s. word ROWTE, company ROVE, see ROFFE RYCHE, mighty [man] RYFFE, rife RYGHTWOSSE, righteous

SAD, SADDLE, Weary SALOWES, SALUES, SALUTES; pret. SALUED SAMEN, together SANZFAYLE, in truth SAUMBRIES, housings SAWES, speeches SCAUBERKE, scabbard SCRYVED, burst SECHE, seek SEKE, sick SEKENYD, sickened SEKEREST, SUREST SEKERYD, confirmed SEKERYNGE, assurance SELY, very SEM(E)LY, seemly [one] SENGLE, singularly SENTE, consent SETHE, since

SENTE, consent
SETHE, since
SEY, SAW
SHENDE, SHENT(E), v. disgraced,
ruined; SHENDE, s. shame
SHENE, bright, beautiful
SHORE, taken
SHOURE, attack
SHREDDE, v. cut; s. strips

SIGHE, saw SITHE, SYTHE, adv. afterward. then; conj. since SITHEN, SYTHEN, afterward, then SLAE, SLE, SLO(0), slay; pret. SLOUGHE, SLOW SLEE, sly SMOKE, smock SNELLE, active, swift SOUGHT(E), SOWGHT, journeyed, pierced, went; p.p. sought so(u) ND, message SOUND, SOWNE, speech SPELLE, talk SPERYD, shut SPILL, become empty SPREDE, stretched SPRENT(E), sprang STAD, oppressed, placed STEDE, place STERTE, Spring; pret. STERT(E) STIFELY, STYFFELY, STYFFL(E)Y, strongly STIFF(E), STYFFE, strong STODE, sustenance STOUND(E), STOWND(E), battle STOURE, STOWRE, battle STOURNELY, sternly STOWNDE, see stounde STOWRE, see stoure STRAUGHT, put forth his strength STRONG(E), difficult STRYFFE, sharp STYFFE, see stiffe STYFF(E)L(E)Y, see stifely STYNT(E), stop; pret., p.p. STENTE swith(E), swythe, very, quickly (often preceded by pleonastic as, also) SWONGHE, brook (? p. 119) SWONGHE, SWOON SY(GH)E, see sighe SYKER, sure SYNE, since SYTHE, occasion, time; see sithe SYTHEN, see sithen SYTTES, pl. unhappiness, calamity TAKE, betake [thyself] TASE, takes

TASE, takes
TE, come
TELDE, TELDYS, tents
TENE, v. grow vexed; s. anger
TENT, attended to
THAR(E) v. impersonal, needs
THAT, used to introduce a command, a wish

## Glossary

THEDE, country, people THEDIR, THEDGE, thither THEIGH, though THEWIS, manners THO(0), adv. then; pr. those THOSE, there THOUGHT, purposed THRO(0), hard, bold THRYVE, strong TIDANDIS, TITHANDIS, TITHINGIS, TITHYNGIS, TIDINGS: see tvdandes To. until TO-FORNE, before TONE, one TO-TORNE, torn to pieces TRIACLE, antidote TRONCHON, handle TWIGHT, took TYDANDES, TYDANDIS, TYDYNGIS, tidings; see tidandis TYDE, time TYTE, quickly (sometimes preceded by intensive as) TYTHANDES, TYTHANDYS, TYTHIN-GIS, tidings; see tidandis,

VNDER TYME morning VNFAYNE, unhappy VNHEND(E); ungentle, cruel VNKONTH, unknown VNNEH(E), hardly VNSAD, unweary (i.e. relieved) VNSAUGHT, insane VNTYLLE, unto VOUTE, vault VP, open

tydandes

WAITES, WAYTES, watches wake, watch, keep vigils for; pret. WAYKD WARNE, thwart WARYNGE, see werryeng WAYTES, see waites WEDE, v. go mad; pres. WEDIS WEDE, s. apparel, armour WEDERES, WEDYR, weather WELDE, control, rule WELINEY, well-nigh WEND, turn; pret. WENTE WEND(E), inf., imv., pres., subj. go; bres. WENDIS, WENDYS; imu. WENDYS, WENDYTH(E); D.D. WENDYN

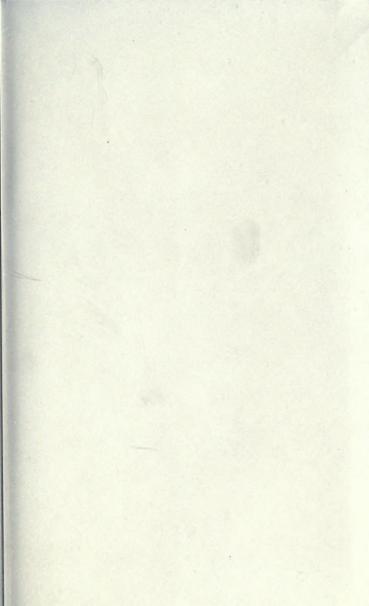
WENE, v., inf., pres. think, suppose; WENYSTOW, WENYS: thinkest thou: pret. WENDE, WENTE WENE, s. doubt WENGE, avenge WER(R)E, War WERRYENG, WERRYNGE, WARYNGE, warfare WERYD, Wore WESSCHE, washed WET(T)E, inf., imv. know; WETE WEXED, waxed; WEXE. D.D. WEXYN WHEDYR, adv. whither; whether WHERE, WHETHER (introducing a direct question) which, with WIGHT, WYGHT, s. person, thing; ANYWIGHT, at all; NO WIGHT, not at all wight, valiant WIGHT(E)LY, WYGHTELY, strongly, quickly wis, direct WITE, WYTE, reproach; bres. WITESTE with, in WODE, WOOD, mad wokys, weeks WOLDE, control WONE, v. dwell; pret. WONYD. WOUNYD WONE, s. abundance WONNE, dwelling wonnyng, dwelling wood, see wode WOODELY, madly WORTHE, v. become WORTHE, adj. worthy worthis, mounts woste, knewest WOTE, know. WOUND, go. WOUND(E), hesitate, know WRAKE, ruin, trouble WRATHED, angered WYGHT, see wight WYGHTELY, see wightly WYKKE, severe WYLANLYCHE, villainously WYNNE, joy WYTE, see wite YA, yea

YAT, gate
YARE, adj. ready; adv. quickly
YCHE, see ichee
YCHME, see ichme
YEDE, YO(0)DE, Went
YEFF, YEUE, give; pret. YAFE,
YAFF(E); inv. YIF, YIFFE; pres.
Subj. YEFFE, YIFF; p.p. YEVE
YEVELLE, YVELLE, YUELLE, evil

Y(G)EN, eyes YIF(E), YIFF(E), if YIFTYS, gifts YIT, even YLKE, see ilke YOLDE, yielden; p.p. YOLDEN YUELLE, see yevelle YVELLE, see yevelle









Morte Arthure.

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